




"The virtue  
of books is the  
perfecting of  
reason, which is  
indeed the hap-  
piness of man."

*Richard De  
Bury.*

"On bokès for  
to rede I me  
delyte."

*Chaucer.*



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# **English Readings for Schools**

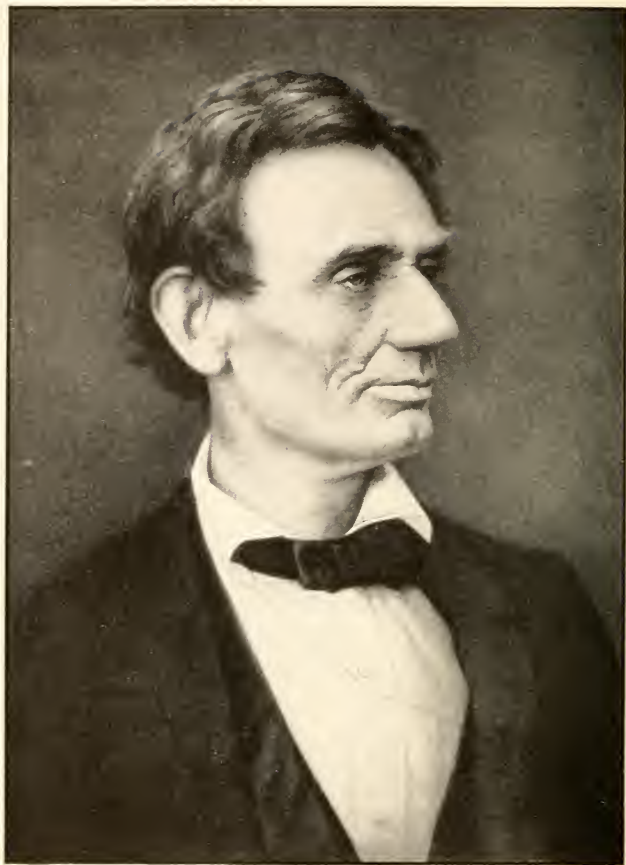
GENERAL EDITOR

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Abraham Lincoln

From a photograph taken soon after his nomination in 1860



MACAULAY'S  
SPEECHES ON COPYRIGHT  
AND  
LINCOLN'S ADDRESS AT  
COOPER INSTITUTE

WITH OTHER ADDRESSES AND LETTERS

EDITED BY  
JAMES FLEMING HOSIC  
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CHICAGO NORMAL COLLEGE



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# INTRODUCTION

## I

### THE STUDY OF THE SPEECHES OF MACAULAY AND LINCOLN

Recent years have witnessed a remarkable revival of interest in oral English. This is very gratifying, for speech is by far the most important single acquirement of man and it is the oral form of it that is generally used. Schools should, therefore, provide opportunity for much training in speech. This can not be done by means of writing but must be accomplished by actual speaking on congenial themes to interested and sympathetic audiences.

As in the case of other arts, the art of speaking is conditioned largely by proper conceptions of speech. One must have ideals, must realize the possibilities. Through study of the achievements of others we may perfect ourselves. Only so can education shorten the period of experimenting and bring the individual to assured control of his powers.

Such considerations are sufficient to justify the preparation of a book of speeches by Lincoln and Macaulay for study by pupils in the high school. To these considerations may be added others of almost equal importance. Both men have wholesome and absorbingly interesting biographies. Both were statesmen, identified with their country's history,—Lincoln, especially, summing up in his experience more of what makes America the nation it is to-day than any other since the time of Washington.

Both were exceedingly effective speakers; no more striking examples of the power of persuasion in public address can be found than Macaulay's speeches on Copyright and Lincoln's address at Cooper Union.

There are, to be sure, striking contrasts between these men, as may be seen at once by a study of their early lives, their education, their social training, and their personal characters. Yet at the bottom the successes of both are to be traced to the same sources. Both were kindly, sincere, and earnest men, who threw themselves without reserve into any cause which enlisted their sympathy; both prepared for their tasks with the utmost diligence; each commanded respect by his personality and each moved straight on to his goal, unspoiled by praise and unhindered by blame. In the last analysis, the speeches of one have the same value as those of the other; they reflect the character of a true man of purpose who used his opportunities and attained real greatness.

## II

### THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

The career of Macaulay has been made familiar to most high school boys and girls in connection with the reading of his essays on Milton and on Johnson. Doubtless many who will use this book will find little that is new in the following account of him. The point of view, however, from which these paragraphs are written is new, inasmuch as we shall trace, not the whole life of the man, but only those events and influences which give promise of explaining to some degree his remarkable forensic ability. Macaulay was always a pleader; he was always conscious of an audience. His was the rôle of the advocate rather than



of the judge. Hence the reader feels that he is being urged to pass judgment even in those pieces, like the *Essay on Addison*, which are most purely critical in character. But we are here concerned with the orator, with Macaulay the parliamentarian, rather than with Macaulay the critic, biographer, or historian. Hence we shall inquire how it was that he became a great speaker.

We note first of all that Macaulay was precocious and that he had a good home. The biography of him by his nephew, Mr. G. O. Trevelyan, contains plenty of evidence of both, and this biography every one who is interested in Macaulay will read. From it he will learn that Macaulay's ancestors were men of brains; that his father was a somewhat overzealous but thoroughly upright and able reformer, who played a part in the freeing of the slaves in the English colonies second only to that of Wilberforce himself; that Macaulay's mother was of more genial temperament and that to her Macaulay owed a large measure of his capacity for good fellowship and his taste for reading. This was manifested to a remarkable degree when he was but a child of three, though doubtless the stories of his expounding large volumes to the serving-maid at that age are somewhat highly colored. He did, however, read such pieces as Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* at six and was able to repeat whole cantos of it from memory after a single perusal. This singular power to read several times as fast as the ordinary person and to recall at any time almost the exact language of all that he had read made possible that astonishing array of facts and allusions characteristic of his magazine articles and his *History of England*, as well as of his speeches.

The main facts concerning Macaulay's life and works are soon told. Born October 25, 1800, at Rothley Temple, the home of Mrs. Macaulay's sister in central England,

the eldest of nine children, he spent his childhood in London, first at Birchin Lane in the heart of the city and afterward at Clapham in the suburbs. Here he had access to the Common, a park with shrubs and trees and somewhat diversified landscape, which furnished a world for the exercise of his active imagination. This was stirred by his omnivorous reading, in which he was guided and encouraged by Hannah More, with whom he frequently passed weeks without returning home. He went to school to Mr. Greaves, though unwillingly; his mother was obliged to say to him daily, "Tom, if it rains cats and dogs, you shall go." He preferred to stay at home and read or write.

Amazing tales are told concerning the kinds and quantity of writing which the boy did. At eight he compiled a tolerable compendium of universal history. A little later he wrote a treatise on Christianity to be translated into the language of Malabar in order to convert the inhabitants. After reading Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* and *Marmion*, he began a poem in six cantos to be called "The Battle of Cheviot," but left this after producing a hundred and twenty lines, in order to undertake an heroic poem entitled *Olaus the Great*, or *The Conquest of Mona*, in which both the ancestry and the posterity of the family were to be idealized. Two cantos of this were completed. When we add to this list of accomplishments several hymns, we have a record probably unsurpassed by any boy under ten.

In the course of 1812 it became evident that young Macaulay must have a more advanced school, and that of the Rev. Mr. Preston, at Little Shelford, a village near Cambridge, was decided upon. Here, though very homesick, Thomas did well, got an ambition to attend Cambridge, and was befriended by the great Dean Milner.

He read much, both at school and at home in vacations, and laid up in store immense acquisitions of prose and verse. *Pilgrim's Progress* and *Paradise Lost*, for example, he could reproduce entire. When at home he read aloud to the family in the evening.

The Macaulay home was the frequent meeting place of a group of Parliamentarians deeply interested in the various causes to which Zachary Macaulay, the father of Thomas, was devoted. In this way it came about that the youth had a most thorough schooling in the discussion of public questions. Here was a group of men, thoroughly in earnest and among the most influential of their time, sincerely discussing measures for the public good. Small wonder that the impressionable boy who listened to them should have set up ideals which bore fruit later in notable service in the very legislative body to which they belonged.

In October, 1818, Macaulay became a student at Trinity College, Cambridge, and remained there constantly for nearly eight years, becoming a bachelor of arts in 1821, a master of arts and a fellow of the college in 1824. His Cambridge experience was, all in all, the happiest of his life. He enjoyed the intellectual companionship of the brightest minds, he could read without hindrance, and he was proud of the honors which were accorded him in all subjects except in mathematics, which he abhorred. Perhaps most important in view of his future was the gradual shaping of his opinions in favor of the Whigs, to the great discomfort of his father, who was a follower of Pitt.

Not the least valuable of Macaulay's opportunities at college was that of discussion. Evening after evening he dropped into the room of some fellow student, and in company with a few congenial spirits argued pro and con every current question of politics, theology, and the rest. He was, of course, a member of the famous debating society

called the Cambridge Union and was one of its leaders. Here he had just that experience in speaking on his feet, in meeting argument and seeking to carry his point, which would best prepare him for the exacting requirements of debate in the English Parliament. So far as education rather than natural endowment can be said to have made Macaulay a great orator, the Cambridge Union was undoubtedly the most important single factor. So resourceful did the young collegian become that on one occasion a company of visitors at Lord Lansdowne's country home were held spell bound for an entire day listening to a discussion carried on by Macaulay and his friend Austen.

In 1826 Macaulay was called to the bar, but while he enjoyed the social opportunities which travel on the Circuit afforded, he cared little for the practice of law and got few cases. The only important use to which he ever put his legal training was the revision of the penal code of India while he was a member of the Supreme Council there.

Literary work, on the other hand, was most attractive to him. While still in Cambridge he began contributing to *Knight's Quarterly Magazine* and thus attracted the attention of Jeffrey, the famous editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, who invited him to write for what was then the most influential magazine in Great Britain. Macaulay responded with the *Essay on Milton* and found himself suddenly a man of reputation. His breakfast table was covered with invitations to dine out and he had more social engagements than he could keep. During the remainder of his life Macaulay continued to prepare articles for the *Edinburgh Review*, thirty-six in all appearing in it, and so excellent were they that much larger editions than usual were required of the numbers containing them. Indeed, these so called essays—really historical and

biographical monographs—which were hastily prepared and of which the author himself often spoke disparagingly, have made Macaulay known to thousands who have never looked into the more ambitious *History of England* nor ever learned that the writer was one of England's greatest Parliamentarians.

In the year 1819, Zachary Macaulay, through pre-occupation with reform and the bad management of his business partner, began to be in straitened circumstances. The eldest son promptly and cheerfully came to the support of the family and from that time became increasingly its main stay. His income was not sufficient to meet their needs and he actually sold his Cambridge medals to raise money. In 1828, however, he was appointed commissioner of bankruptcy, with a salary of a thousand pounds a year.

Soon after, he was persuaded by Lord Lansdowne to enter Parliament and was elected by the little borough of Calne. It was the period of the great reform bills and no more favorable time for a young man of liberal tendencies to enter the struggle could have been chosen. The Catholic Emancipation Bill had already passed the House of Commons, and a bill to remove the civil disabilities of the Jews had been introduced. On this Macaulay spoke and with such simplicity and earnestness as to make an excellent impression. Affairs were hastening to a crisis. The Bourbons were overthrown in Paris and Macaulay made his first visit to the continent to see for himself how matters stood in the French capital. Discontent with the government in England grew and at last the Whigs came into power. On March 1, 1831, Lord John Russell introduced the Reform Bill, removing the franchise from one hundred and ten boroughs which had ceased to have any considerable population. The next evening Macaulay spoke in favor of the measure with tremendous effect. "When he

'sat down, the speaker sent for him, and told him that, in all his prolonged experience he had never seen the House in such a state of excitement." Macaulay was at once ranked with Fox, Burke, and others as among the greatest of English orators, and from that time the announcement of a speech by him "was like a trumpet call to fill the benches."

During the next three years Macaulay gave his attention almost wholly to the work of Parliament, making many notable speeches. Then he received an appointment as a member of the Supreme Council for India and went there in company with his sister Margaret. He rendered great service to the government, helped to reorganize the educational system and the courts, and returned at the end of five years with a substantial fortune, hoping to devote the remainder of his life to the writing of the history of England from the accession of James the First to the passage of the Reform Bill. The call of public duty was too loud, however, and he soon reëntered Parliament as a member for Edinburgh. In 1839 he entered the Cabinet as Minister for War. It was during this period that he made the two speeches on copyright printed in this volume, the first on February 5, 1841, and the second on April 6, 1842.

In a general election in 1847 Macaulay's Edinburgh constituents failed to return him, but they thought better of it in 1852 and reëlected him without any effort on his part. By this time, however, Macaulay was laboring diligently upon his history and felt that he could ill afford to give to public life the precious hours which remained to him for completing the monumental task which he had mapped out. He was seldom in the House, made few speeches, and at last retired from political life altogether in 1856. Three years only were left to him in which to



work, and only five volumes of his great history were completed, but these are invaluable. Before he died his country recognized his services by making him in 1857 Baron Macaulay of Rothley.

Macaulay's power as a speaker was largely due to his remarkable command of language, his well-stored mind, and his earnestness of manner. He was not graceful and polished in gesture and his voice was not well modulated, but he was always exceedingly clear and he was evidently sincere. Much of his success was due, no doubt, to his unfailing good humor and good sense. While he was at times exceedingly severe in his attacks upon his critics and opponents, especially in his reviews, he was really imbued with a most kindly spirit and reaped in friendship the reward which his own hearty goodwill had won for him.

### III

#### ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Acquaintance with the life and work of Abraham Lincoln might well be made a prerequisite for entering upon the rights and duties of citizenship in the United States. Lowell's estimate in the "Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration" has proved correct.

"Our children shall behold his fame,  
Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,  
The kindly-earnest, brave, far-seeing man,  
New birth of our new soil, the first American."

No other so completely sums up, both in character and in experience, those qualities, ideals, struggles, and achievements which are common to our people and which distinguish us. Lowell might well have said of Lincoln what

he once said of President Hayes, namely, that he found in him "that excellent new thing we call Americanism, which, I suppose, is that dignity of human nature which consists, perhaps, in not thinking yourself either better or worse than your neighbors by reason of any artificial distinction." To know Abraham Lincoln and to appreciate and understand his writings is to come under the influence of a powerful personality and to learn what it means to have a place and opportunity in a great, free country.

Lincoln was called to serve the nation in its hour of greatest need, and the story of how he was prepared for that service and of how he performed it is of such surpassing interest and value that every schoolboy should know it by heart. It is a story of an humble origin, of great privation, of an eager and indomitable purpose, and of steadfast adherence to a noble cause. Lincoln's father was a poor Kentucky white, descended from good stock but of roving and thriftless disposition and never in good circumstances. Lincoln's mother was a charming young woman of refined tastes and delicate constitution, utterly unable to withstand the hardships of pioneering in the unbroken wilderness, to which she early succumbed. From her, undoubtedly, Lincoln inherited the remarkable capacity for appreciation and feeling which he exhibited. This might, however, never have been discovered but for the strong, sympathetic, and intelligent woman whom Thomas Lincoln persuaded to become his second wife. Encouraged by her, young Abraham struggled to obtain an education and never ceased in his endeavors even when he had become the foremost lawyer of Illinois. No better example of the full use of one's opportunities can be found. Finally the slavery issue became Lincoln's chief interest, and to this he gave his deepest study and the utmost of his physical strength, dying for it at last a martyr's death.

The Lincolns were Quakers, coming originally from England and finding their way from point to point in the new land until by 1780 Abraham, Abe's grandfather, was settled on a fine estate in northern Virginia. The farm was in the track of the pioneers migrating to Kentucky, the land which Daniel Boone had opened up, and the Lincolns caught the fever of adventure, sold out for seventeen thousand dollars, moved west, and bought three tracts of government land near what is now Louisville. Alas for their hopes! The father was soon shot down by the Indians and the boys were put out to work, the elder inheriting the property, which was as yet unimproved. Thomas, the youngest, was only six and passed from family to family, eventually learning the carpenter's trade in the shop of Joseph Hanks, and falling in love with the daughter Nancy, who had taught him to write his name.

The young couple began housekeeping in a shed in the village of Elizabethtown, but work was scarce and "Tom" Lincoln was not a good workman and hence he was soon compelled to try farming. On Nolin's creek, a dozen miles away, he built a rough cabin without chinking, door, windows, or floor. Here on February 12, 1809, Abraham Lincoln was born.

Soon, in hope of bettering their condition, the family moved again and built a better cabin near Knob Creek. Abe was now four and for a short time accompanied his sister Nancy to school. With his mother's help he learned to read. He began to ask questions of everybody and learned a good deal from the preachers who occasionally stopped at the Lincoln house.

Thomas Lincoln was too poor to own slaves and there was small chance for any but slave-owners in Kentucky in his day. Accordingly he decided in 1816 to move to the free state of Indiana. He sold his possessions and floated

on a raft down the Ohio to Anderson's Creek, and then, making his way fifteen miles through the forest, selected a spot on Little Pigeon Creek near what is now Gentryville. He then went back for his family and by dint of hewing a road through the woods at last got his wife and children to the place.

It was a wild region, still frequented by big game, and subsistence depended mainly upon hunting and fishing. Every foot of land for cultivation must first be cleared, and Little Abraham, only seven, assisted in this task. Small wonder he became an expert with the axe! There was little time for building; the family spent the winter in a sort of half-faced camp, with a great fire in front of it to keep them from freezing during the bitter winter which came on.

Life here was serious enough. Food was scarce and plain. Clothing must be made of skins. Beds were made by piling leaves upon brush. The days were full of the hardest toil and there were only the mother's Bible stories for entertainment in the evening. In about a year the mother died and left the father and children lonely and miserable indeed. Little Abraham grieved that no funeral service could be preached and contrived to send a note to one of their old friends, the missionary-preacher, David Elkin, who came and performed a service by the mother's grave.

At last the father turned in his extremity to Sarah Johnson, a widow living in Kentucky near his former home, and persuaded her to marry him. She had refused him earlier but now thought better of him and consented to join her lot with his. She was well to do, strong in personality, and of sympathetic disposition. It was a great day for Abraham when she came into his life. She had the cabin put in order; she provided the comforts

of living; and she saw to it that the children had a chance to get somewhat of education. She perceived at once that Abe was no ordinary child and gave him the help and encouragement necessary to enable him to make the most of himself. His love of reading and talking annoyed the father, but the step-mother saw the value of it and shielded him from the father's criticisms.

The opportunities for culture were not many. There was some preaching, by no means all of it good. There was a little schooling; Abe got less than two years all told. But the boy managed to procure a few books. The first was Weems's *Life of Washington*, which Abe paid for by three days of hard work at pulling fodder. Afterward he read *Æsop's Fables*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, a history of the United States, lives of Henry Clay and of Franklin, and the *Revised Statutes of Indiana*—all by the light of the fireplace. The *Bible* he came to know almost by heart. He seized every opportunity to ask questions of travelers passing by, and at eighteen becoming a ferryman, was able to learn a good deal about the world. His fondness for discussion was remarkable, and on occasion he would mount a stump and harangue his companions on the political questions of the day. He often walked many miles to attend court, and as he listened to the pleas doubtless formed an ambition to become a lawyer. At nineteen he went with a flat boat to New Orleans and got there an impression of the wrong of slavery which never left him.

In 1830 the Lincolns moved again. In company with their relatives of the Johnson and Hanks families, they drove by ox team to Illinois and settled near New Salem on the Sangamon River. Abraham was now of age, six feet four inches in height, and capable of immense physical exertion. He engaged in various occupations, such as



working in a general store and in a flouring mill, and in building a flat boat and taking a cargo to New Orleans. He was also the champion wrestler of the neighborhood. In 1832 he served as captain in the Black Hawk War, and finding himself popular, determined to run for the legislature. He announced his candidacy in the following speech: "Fellow citizens, I presume you know who I am. I am humble Abraham Lincoln. I have been solicited by many friends to become a candidate for the legislature. My politics are short and sweet, like the old woman's dance. I am in favor of a national bank. I am in favor of the internal improvement system and a high protective tariff. These are my sentiments and political principles. If elected, I shall be thankful; if not, it will be all the same." He lost the election in spite of almost unanimous support in his own district, but he was never afterward defeated by a popular vote.

Meanwhile Lincoln was continuing his education. He borrowed an English grammar of Mr. Graham, the schoolmaster, and the works of Burns and Shakespeare from others, and having become a storekeeper was so fortunate as to buy a barrel of old household stuff containing a complete edition of Blackstone's *Commentaries*. This he literally devoured.

The store proving a failure, Lincoln became in succession postmaster of New Salem, and then county surveyor. He also fell in love with Ann Rutledge, the beautiful daughter of the innkeeper, and hoped to begin the practice of law so that he might have a sufficient income on which to marry. This beautiful dream was shattered by Miss Rutledge's death, an event which gave Lincoln so severe a shock that for a time it was feared that he might lose his mind. It was years before he could think calmly of his loss.



In 1834 Lincoln was elected to the legislature and thereafter was much in public life. In 1836 he was reelected and was instrumental in having the state capitol moved from Vandalia to Springfield. He also joined with one other in a protest against the passage of resolutions concerning slavery, on the ground that while slavery was wrong, the promulgation of abolition doctrines would only increase the evils. Such a stand at that time required courage.

The next year Lincoln was admitted to the bar and removed to Springfield to engage in the practice of law. His entire personal effects he carried in his saddle-bags. Business came slowly, but there was much opportunity for discussion of political questions. In a debating society which he helped to organize Lincoln had his first opportunity to oppose Stephen A. Douglas, with whom he was destined to come many times into conflict. He gradually gained a reputation for honesty and for ability in influencing juries and so rose eventually to be the leading lawyer of Illinois.

In 1838 and again in 1840 he was reelected to the legislature, and in the latter year he cast a vote as presidential elector for William Henry Harrison, the Whig candidate for President of the United States. About this time, too, he was married to Mary Todd, a handsome and ambitious daughter of one of the best families in Springfield. Four years later he made many speeches in support of Henry Clay for President and became deeply interested in national politics. Clay was defeated by the Democratic candidate, James K. Polk, who was committed to the policy of adding Texas to the Union as a slave state. In 1846 Lincoln was elected to Congress and went to Washington determined to oppose this measure and all others looking to extension of slavery. He found the national capitol itself in the con-

trol of the institution and sought to secure the passage of a law forbidding slavery in the District of Columbia, with the proviso that the government should pay the owners for the slaves which should be set free. The Whigs, however, would not rally to such a measure and of course the Democrats opposed it.

After serving his term Lincoln returned to the practice of law, spending eight months of each year in riding the circuit and the other four in Springfield, where he had much leisure for reading history and government in the libraries at the State House. They were years of excellent training for the severe trials which lay just ahead.

Events were moving rapidly in the field of national politics. The admission of Texas as a slave state was not sufficient to satisfy the South. The Compromise of 1850 was devised by Clay and Webster and passed by Congress, but it only increased the bitter feeling of the people. Then the South secured the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and thus made it possible to extend by act of Congress the slave territory north of the southern boundary of Missouri. The territory included in what are now Nebraska and Kansas was about to be organized into states, and Stephen A. Douglas, who had become the leading figure among the Democrats of the North, introduced a bill in Congress providing that the people of this territory might decide for themselves whether they would have slaves or not. The measure carried.

It was clear that a crisis had come. Those opposed to the extension of slavery saw that they must assert themselves or slavery would invade even free states. Lincoln was deeply moved and threw himself heart and soul into the contest. He became a candidate for the United States Senate but lacked five votes in the legislature and persuaded his supporters to rally to his friend Trumbull, an

anti-slavery Democrat. In 1854 a new political party made up of anti-slavery Whigs and Democrats, the members of which called themselves Republicans, was organized and Lincoln quickly became the chief spokesman of this party in Illinois. At the first Republican national convention, held in Philadelphia in 1856, Lincoln received 110 votes for Vice President. This showed that he was beginning to be known, and favorably known, outside of his own state. Mr. Buchanan, the Democratic candidate, was elected President, but the Republicans cast nearly a million and a half of votes and had great reason to be encouraged by their showing.

Two years later Stephen A. Douglas became a candidate for reelection as United States Senator from Illinois. When he returned from Washington he found his political fences badly out of repair, but he was clever and powerful and soon had his mending well in hand. Then it was that the Republican leaders conceived the idea of pitting Lincoln, their candidate, against him in joint debate. Douglas rather ungraciously accepted the challenge and there followed a series of five of the most remarkable political gatherings in history. The meeting places were so arranged that each section of the state was visited, and few voters failed to attend one or more of the debates. Men, women, and children traveled for miles and camped out over night in order to be present. Each speaker had an hour and a half, first Douglas and then Lincoln taking an hour to open and a half hour to close. Douglas was polished, witty, clever, and confident; Lincoln, awkward but clear, earnest, and determined.

The climax was reached when Lincoln asked Douglas this question: "Can the people of a United States territory, in any lawful way, against the wish of any citizen of the United States, exclude slavery from its limits prior to the

formation of a state constitution." Douglas answered that they could by means of their own police regulations. His answer satisfied the Democratic voters of Illinois and secured Lincoln's defeat for the senatorship, but it turned the South against Douglas and helped to prevent his obtaining the Presidency two years later. This result Lincoln clearly foresaw, and persisted in asking his question against the advice of friends, saying: "The battle of 1860 is worth a hundred of this."

The Lincoln-Douglas debates were widely published and set all the nation to thinking. They made Lincoln known throughout the country and brought him numerous invitations to speak. He did go to Kansas and Wisconsin and he replied to Douglas in Ohio. In October, 1859, he made an engagement to speak in New York before the Young Men's Republican Union, and in February of 1860 delivered in Cooper Institute his remarkable address on the position of the founders of the government with regard to slavery. This proved to the critical East his ability as a thinker and as an orator and rendered possible his being chosen as the available candidate for President by the Republicans at their national convention in Chicago the following November. The impression which he made can be understood from the words of Joseph H. Choate, one of our ambassadors to England, who was present. "He appeared in every sense of the word like one of the plain people among whom he loved to be counted. At first sight there was nothing impressive or imposing about him—except that his great stature singled him out from the crowd; his clothes hung awkwardly on his giant frame, his face was of a dark pallor without the slightest tinge of color; his seamed and rugged features bore the furrows of hardship and struggle; his deepset eyes looked sad and anxious; his countenance in repose gave little evidence of

that brain-power which had raised him from the lowest to the highest station among his countrymen; as he talked to me before the meeting, he seemed ill at ease, with that sort of apprehension which a young man might feel before presenting himself to a new and strange audience, whose critical disposition he dreaded. . . . When he spoke he was transformed; his eye kindled, his voice rang, his face shone and seemed to light up the whole assembly. For an hour and a half he held his audience in the hollow of his hand."

The story of Lincoln's election, of the secession of the Southern States, of his wonderful patience, wisdom, and fortitude through five years of civil war, of his triumphal reëlection, and of his humane and statesmanlike plans for the reconstruction of the defeated Southern States, is familiar to all. To give an account of these things would be to write an epitome of our history during those troubled years. At last death by an assassin's hand laid low our great emancipator, and the whole nation mourned. Even to-day we read with sincere feeling Walt Whitman's well known lines:—

### O CAPTAIN! MY CAPTAIN!

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,  
The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,  
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,  
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;  
    But O heart! heart! heart!  
    O the bleeding drops of red,  
    Where on the deck my Captain lies,  
    Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;  
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,  
For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,  
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;  
    Here Captain! dear father!  
    This arm beneath your head!  
    It is some dream that on the deck,  
    You've fallen cold and dead.



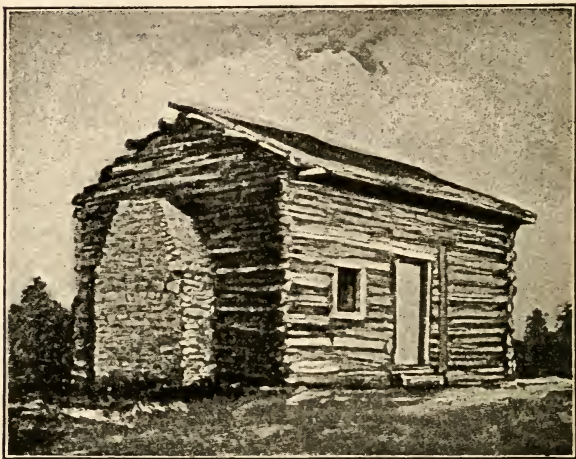
My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,  
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,  
The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,  
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;

Exult O shores, and ring O bells!

But I with mournful tread,

Walk the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.



Lincoln's Birthplace

## DESCRIPTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY

The authoritative biography of Macaulay was written by his nephew, G. O. Trevelyan. This is entitled *The Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay*, and is published by Harper and Brothers (New York, 1876). More critical in character is the brief *Macaulay* by J. Cotter Morison, in the English Men of Letters Series, also published by Harper and Brothers (1883). The standard edition of Macaulay's works is that edited by his sister, Lady Trevelyan. This is in eight volumes and is published by Longmans, Green, and Co. (London, 1866). A handy volume of Macaulay's speeches is issued by Hurst & Co. of New York; and Everyman's Library (E. P. Dutton) includes a similar though not so complete a collection. The Parliamentary debates on copyright may be found in the edition published by Hansard for the years 1841-1842.

The student of the art of speech-making may consult with profit such books as Phillips's *Effective Speaking* (Newton and Co., Chicago) and Denney's *American Public Addresses* (Scott Foresman and Co., Chicago), which contains an excellent though brief account of the history of oratory and an analysis of the structure of a speech, together with several complete examples.

Everyone who reads Macaulay's speeches on copyright will wish to know what the present law on the subject is. The British law is explained by G. S. Robertson in his treatise, *The Law of Copyright* (Oxford, The Clarendon Press, 1912). The law in the United States is set forth in certain pamphlets to be obtained from Thorvald Sol-

berg, Register of copyrights, Library of Congress, Washington. Mr. Solberg is able to supply also a brief history of copyright enactments from 1783-1900. A more thorough study of the subject may be made by referring to *Play-right and Copyright in All Countries*, by W. M. Colles and Harold Hardy (The Macmillan Company, New York, 1906) and *Copyright: Its History and Law*, by R. R. Bowker (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1911).

#### ABRAHAM LINCOLN

The number of books and pamphlets about Lincoln is enormous. Probably no one will ever attempt to read all of them. Only a few are really important. The chief biography is by John G. Nicolay and John Hay, two of Mr. Lincoln's secretaries. It is called *Abraham Lincoln, a History* and was published in ten volumes by the Century Company in 1890. John Nicolay condensed the longer history into a *Short Life of Abraham Lincoln* (Century Company, 1902), and Helen Nicolay wrote a *Boy's Life of Abraham Lincoln* (Century Company, 1908). A very readable and also very complete biography was prepared for "McClure's Magazine" by Ida M. Tarbell and appeared in installments from 1894 to 1899, being afterward published in two volumes (McClure, Phillips, 1900). *Abraham Lincoln, The True Story of a Great Life*, by W. H. Herndon and J. W. Weik, is an intimate personal account by two of Mr. Lincoln's friends and associates in Illinois. Although very interesting, this book is to some extent misleading. One of the best short lives is that by Norman Hapgood, *Lincoln, The Man of the People* (Macmillan, 1899). Alonzo Rothschild presents *Lincoln, Master of Men* (Houghton Mifflin Co., 1906), emphasizing Lincoln's influence over his associates. John T. Morse, Jr., writes



of Lincoln the statesman, showing his relation to American history (*Abraham Lincoln*, 2 vols., Houghton Mifflin Co., 1893). The best volume of *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln* is by A. T. Rice (Harper and Bros., 1909).

Among the best essays and tributes are Ralph Waldo Emerson's *Abraham Lincoln*, being his remarks at the funeral services in Concord, April 19, 1865, Lowell's *Abraham Lincoln*, which appeared in the *North American Review* for January, 1864, and Carl Schurz's *Abraham Lincoln*, originally a review of the biography by Nicolay and Hay. These three essays, with other valuable material are contained in a single number of the Riverside Literature Series (Houghton Mifflin Company) and may also be found in the collected works of the respective authors. An excellent address on *The Career and Character of Abraham Lincoln*, was delivered by Joseph H. Choate, our ambassador to Great Britain, at the Philosophical Institution of Edinburgh, Nov. 13, 1900. This appears in Lapsey's edition of Lincoln's *Writings*, Vol. I (1905). Among the other noted addresses are those by Charles Sumner, Bishop Fowler, and Henry Watterson.

The *Complete Works* of Lincoln, comprising his speeches, letters, state papers, and miscellaneous writings, were edited by John G. Nicolay and John Hay and published in two volumes by the Century Company in 1894. A new and enlarged edition in twelve volumes was issued by the Tandy-Thomas Company in 1905-06. This contains a general introduction by Richard Watson Gilder, articles by Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Watterson, and several other noted men, an anthology, a bibliography having 1080 titles, and a chronological index. Every high-school library should possess this most valuable work. A useful, but by no means complete, little volume is Roe's *Speeches and Letters of Abraham Lincoln* in Everyman's Library

(E. P. Dutton & Co., 1907). This contains an introduction by James Bryce. References to other editions of Lincoln's speeches, with a well classified and annotated bibliography of books and magazine articles about Lincoln and portraits of him, will be found in Special Bulletin No. 7, issued by the Chicago Public Library in January, 1909.

MACAULAY'S SPEECHES  
ON COPYRIGHT



Thomas Babington Macaulay

## FIRST SPEECH ON COPYRIGHT

DELIVERED IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

FEBRUARY 5, 1841

THOUGH, Sir, it is in some sense agreeable to approach a subject with which political animosities have nothing to do, I offer myself to your notice with some reluctance. It is painful to me to take a course which may possibly be misunderstood or misrepresented as unfriendly to the interests of literature and literary men. It is painful to me, I will add, to oppose my honorable and learned friend on a question which he has taken up from the purest motives, and which he regards with a parental interest. These feelings have hitherto kept me silent when the law of copyright has been under discussion. But as I am, on full consideration, satisfied that the measure before us will, if adopted, inflict grievous injury on the public, without conferring any compensating advantage on men of letters, I think it my duty to avow that opinion and to defend it.

The first thing to be done, Sir, is to settle on what principles the question is to be argued. Are we free to legislate for the public good, or are we not? Is this a question of expediency, or is it a question of right? Many of those who have written and petitioned against the existing state of things treat the question as one of right. The law of nature, according to them, gives to every man a sacred and indefeasible property in his own ideas, in the fruits of his own reason and imagination. The legislature has indeed the power to take away this property, just as it has the power to pass an act of attainder for cutting off an

innocent man's head without a trial. But, as such an act of attainder would be legal murder, so would an act invading the right of an author to his copy be, according to these gentlemen, legal robbery.

- 5 Now, Sir, if this be so, let justice be done, cost what it may. I am not prepared, like my honorable and learned friend, to agree to a compromise between right and expediency, and to commit an injustice for the public convenience. But I must say, that his theory soars far beyond  
10 the reach of my faculties. It is not necessary to go, on the present occasion, into a metaphysical inquiry about the origin of the right of property; and certainly nothing but the strongest necessity would lead me to discuss a subject so likely to be distasteful to the House. I agree, I own,  
15 with Paley in thinking that property is the creature of the law, and that the law which creates property can be defended only on this ground, that it is a law beneficial to mankind. But it is unnecessary to debate that point. For, even if I believed in a natural right of property, inde-  
20 pendent of utility and anterior to legislation, I should still deny that this right could survive the original proprietor. Few, I apprehend, even of those who have studied in the most mystical and sentimental schools of moral philosophy, will be disposed to maintain that there is a natural law of  
25 succession older and of higher authority than any human code. If there be, it is quite certain that we have abuses to reform much more serious than any connected with the question of copyright. For this natural law can be only one; and the modes of succession in the Queen's dominions  
30 are twenty. To go no further than England, land generally descends to the eldest son. In Kent the sons share and share alike. In many districts the youngest takes the whole. Formerly a portion of a man's personal property was secured to his family; and it was only of the residue

that he could dispose by will. Now he can dispose of the whole by will: but you limited his power, a few years ago, by enacting that the will should not be valid unless there were two witnesses. If a man dies intestate, his personal property generally goes according to the Statute of Distributions; but there are local customs which modify that statute. Now which of all these systems is conformed to the eternal standard of right? Is it primogeniture, or gavelkind, or borough English? Are wills *jure divino*? Are the two witnesses *jure divino*? Might not the *pars rationabilis* of our old law have a fair claim to be regarded as of celestial institution? Was the Statute of Distributions enacted in Heaven long before it was adopted by Parliament? Or is it to Custom of York, or to Custom of London, that this preëminence belongs? Surely, Sir, even those who hold that there is a natural right of property must admit that rules prescribing the manner in which the effects of deceased persons shall be distributed are purely arbitrary, and originate altogether in the will of the legislature. If so, Sir, there is no controversy between my honorable and learned friend and myself as to the principles on which this question is to be argued. For the existing law gives an author copyright during his natural life; nor do I propose to invade that privilege, which I should, on the contrary, be prepared to defend strenuously against any assailant. The only point in issue between us is, how long after an author's death the state shall recognize a copyright in his representatives and assigns; and it can, I think, hardly be disputed by any rational man that this is a point which the legislature is free to determine in the way which may appear to be the most conducive to the general good.

We may now, therefore, I think, descend from these high regions, where we are in danger of being lost in the clouds, to firm ground and clear light. Let us look at this question



like legislators, and after fairly balancing conveniences and inconveniences, pronounce between the existing law of copyright and the law now proposed to us. The question of copyright, Sir, like most questions of civil prudence, is  
5 neither black nor white, but gray. The system of copyright has great advantages and great disadvantages; and it is our business to ascertain what these are, and then to make an arrangement under which the advantages may be as far as possible secured, and the disadvantages as far as  
10 possible excluded. The charge which I bring against my honorable and learned friend's bill is this, that it leaves the advantages nearly what they are at present, and increases the disadvantages at least four fold.

The advantages arising from a system of copyright are  
15 obvious. It is desirable that we should have a supply of good books: we cannot have such a supply unless men of letters are liberally remunerated; and the least objectionable way of remunerating them is by means of copyright. You cannot depend for literary instruction and amusement  
20 on the leisure of men occupied in the pursuits of active life. Such men may occasionally produce compositions of great merit. But you must not look to such men for works which require deep meditation and long research. Works of that kind you can expect only from persons who make literature  
25 the business of their lives. Of these persons few will be found among the rich and the noble. The rich and the noble are not impelled to intellectual exertion by necessity. They may be impelled to intellectual exertion by the desire of distinguishing themselves, or by the desire of benefiting  
30 the community. But it is generally within these walls that they seek to signalize themselves and to serve their fellow creatures. Both their ambition and their public spirit, in a country like this, naturally take a political turn. It is, then, on men whose profession is literature, and whose



private means are not ample, that you must rely for a supply of valuable books. Such men must be remunerated for their literary labor. And there are only two ways in which they can be remunerated. One of those ways is patronage; the other is copyright.

There have been times in which men of letters looked, not to the public, but to the government, or to a few great men, for the reward of their exertions. It was thus in the time of Mæcenas and Pollio at Rome, of the Medici at Florence, of Lewis the Fourteenth in France, of Lord Halifax and Lord Oxford in this country. Now, Sir, I well know that there are cases in which it is fit and graceful, nay, in which it is a sacred duty, to reward the merits or to relieve the distresses of men of genius by the exercise of this species of liberality. But these cases are exceptions. I can conceive no system more fatal to the integrity and independence of literary men than one under which they should be taught to look for their daily bread to the favor of ministers and nobles. I can conceive no system more certain to turn those minds which are formed by nature to be the blessings and ornaments of our species into public scandals and pests.

We have, then, only one resource left. We must betake ourselves to copyright, be the inconveniences of copyright what they may. Those inconveniences, in truth, are neither few nor small. Copyright is monopoly, and produces all the effects which the general voice of mankind attributes to monopoly. My honorable and learned friend talks very contemptuously of those who are led away by the theory that monopoly makes things dear. That monopoly makes things dear is certainly a theory, as all the great truths which have been established by the experience of all ages and nations, and which are taken for granted in all reasonings, may be said to be theories. It is

a theory in the same sense in which it is a theory that day and night follow each other, that lead is heavier than water, that bread nourishes, that arsenic poisons, that alcohol intoxicates. If, as my honorable and learned friend seems  
5 to think, the whole world is in the wrong on this point, if the real effect of monopoly is to make articles good and cheap, why does he stop short in his career of change? Why does he limit the operation of so salutary a principle to sixty years? Why does he consent to anything short of  
10 a perpetuity? He told us that in consenting to anything short of a perpetuity he was making a compromise between extreme right and expediency. But if his opinion about monopoly be correct, extreme right and expediency would coincide. Or rather why should we not restore the monop-  
15 oly of the East India trade to the East India Company? Why should we not revive all those old monopolies which, in Elizabeth's reign, galled our fathers so severely that, maddened by intolerable wrong, they opposed to their sovereign a resistance before which her haughty spirit  
20 quailed for the first and for the last time? Was it the cheapness and excellence of commodities that then so violently stirred the indignation of the English people. I believe, Sir, that I may safely take it for granted that the effect of monopoly generally is to make articles scarce, to  
25 make them dear, and to make them bad. And I may with equal safety challenge my honorable friend to find out any distinction between copyright and other privileges of the same kind; any reason why monopoly of books should produce an effect directly the reverse of that which was  
30 produced by the East India Company's monopoly of tea, or by Lord Essex's monopoly of sweet wines. Thus, then, stands the case. It is good that authors should be remunerated; and the least exceptionable way of remunerating them is by a monopoly. Yet monopoly is an evil. For

the sake of the good we must submit to the evil; but the evil ought not to last a day longer than is necessary for the purpose of securing the good.

Now, I will not affirm that the existing law is perfect, that it exactly hits the point at which the monopoly ought to cease; but this I confidently say, that the existing law is very much nearer that point than the law proposed by my honorable and learned friend. For consider this: the evil effects of the monopoly are proportioned to the length of its duration. But the good effects for the sake of which we bear with the evil effects are by no means proportioned to the length of its duration. A monopoly of sixty years produces twice as much evil as a monopoly of thirty years, and thrice as much evil as a monopoly of twenty years. But it is by no means the fact that a posthumous monopoly of sixty years gives to an author thrice as much pleasure and thrice as strong a motive as a posthumous monopoly of twenty years. On the contrary, the difference is so small as to be hardly perceptible. We all know how faintly we are affected by the prospect of very distant advantages, even when they are advantages which we may reasonably hope that we shall ourselves enjoy. But an advantage that is to be enjoyed more than half a century after we are dead, by somebody, we know not by whom, perhaps by somebody unborn, by somebody utterly unconnected with us, is really no motive at all to action. It is very probable that, in the course of some generations, land in the unexplored and unmapped heart of the Australasian continent will be very valuable. But there is none of us who would lay down five pounds for a whole province in the heart of the Australasian continent. We know that neither we, nor anybody for whom we care, will ever receive a farthing of rent from such a province. And a man is very little moved by the thought that in the year 2000 or 2100, somebody

who claims through him will employ more shepherds than Prince Esterhazy, and will have the finest house and gallery of pictures at Victoria or Sydney. Now, this is the sort of boon which my honorable and learned friend holds  
5 out to authors. Considered as a boon to them, it is a mere nullity; but, considered as an impost on the public, it is no nullity, but a very serious and pernicious reality. I will take an example. Dr. Johnson died fifty-six years ago. If the law were what my honorable and learned friend wishes  
10 to make it, somebody would now have the monopoly of Dr. Johnson's works. Who that somebody would be it is impossible to say; but we may venture to guess. I guess, then, that it would have been some bookseller, who was the assign of another bookseller, who was the grandson of  
15 a third bookseller, who had bought the copyright from Black Frank, the Doctor's servant and residuary legatee, in 1785 or 1786. Now, would the knowledge that this copyright would exist in 1841 have been a source of gratification to Johnson? Would it have stimulated his exer-  
20 tions? Would it have once drawn him out of his bed before noon? Would it have once cheered him under a fit of the spleen? Would it have induced him to give us one more allegory, one more life of a poet, one more imitation of Juvenal? I firmly believe not. I firmly believe that a  
25 hundred years ago, when he was writing our debates for the *Gentleman's Magazine*, he would very much rather have had twopence to buy a plate of shin of beef at a cook's shop underground. Considered as a reward to him, the difference between a twenty years' term and a sixty years' term  
30 of posthumous copyright would have been nothing or next to nothing. But is the difference nothing to us? I can buy *Rasselas* for sixpence; I might have had to give five shillings for it. I can buy the *Dictionary*, the entire genuine *Dictionary*, for two guineas, perhaps less; I might have had

to give five or six guineas for it. Do I grudge this to a man like Dr. Johnson? Not at all. Show me that the prospect of this boon roused him to any vigorous effort, or sustained his spirits under depressing circumstances, and I am quite willing to pay the price of such an object, heavy as that price is. But what I do complain of is that my circumstances are to be worse, and Johnson's none the better; that I am to give five pounds for what to him was not worth a farthing. 5

The principle of copyright is this. It is a tax on readers for the purpose of giving a bounty to writers. The tax is an exceedingly bad one; it is a tax on one of the most innocent and most salutary of human pleasures; and never let us forget that a tax on innocent pleasures is a premium on vicious pleasures. I admit, however, the necessity of giving a bounty to genius and learning. In order to give such a bounty, I willingly submit even to this severe and burdensome tax. Nay, I am ready to increase the tax, if it can be shown that by so doing I should proportionally increase the bounty. My complaint is, that my honorable and learned friend doubles, triples, quadruples the tax, and makes scarcely any perceptible addition to the bounty. Why, Sir, what is the additional amount of taxation which would have been levied on the public for Dr. Johnson's works alone, if my honorable and learned friend's bill had been the law of the land? I have not data sufficient to form an opinion. But I am confident that the taxation on his *Dictionary* alone would have amounted to many thousands of pounds. In reckoning the whole additional sum which the holders of his copyrights would have taken out of the pockets of the public during the last half century at twenty thousand pounds, I feel satisfied that I very greatly underrate it. Now, I again say that I think it but fair that we should pay twenty thousand pounds in consideration of 10 15 20 25 30

twenty thousand pounds' worth of pleasure and encouragement received by Dr. Johnson. But I think it very hard that we should pay twenty thousand pounds for what he would not have valued at five shillings.

- 5 My honorable and learned friend dwells on the claims of the posterity of great writers. Undoubtedly, Sir, it would be very pleasing to see a descendant of Shakespeare living in opulence on the fruits of his great ancestor's genius. A house maintained in splendor by such a patri-  
10 mony would be a more interesting and striking object than Blenheim is to us, or than Strathfieldsaye will be to our children. But, unhappily, it is scarcely possible that, under any system, such a thing can come to pass. My honorable and learned friend does not propose that copy-  
15 right shall descend to the eldest son, or shall be bound by irrevocable entail. It is to be merely personal property. It is therefore highly improbable that it will descend during sixty years or half that term from parent to child. The chance is that more people than one will have an  
20 interest in it. They will in all probability sell it and divide the proceeds. The price which a bookseller will give for it will bear no proportion to the sum which he will afterwards draw from the public, if his speculation proves successful. He will give little, if anything, more for a term of  
25 sixty years than for a term of thirty or five-and-twenty. The present value of a distant advantage is always small; but when there is great room to doubt whether a distant advantage will be any advantage at all, the present value sinks to almost nothing. Such is the inconstancy of the  
30 public taste that no sensible man will venture to pronounce, with confidence, what the sale of any book published in our days will be in the years between 1890 and 1900. The whole fashion of thinking and writing has often undergone a change in a much shorter period than that



to which my honorable and learned friend would extend posthumous copyright. What would have been considered the best literary property in the earlier part of Charles the Second's reign? I imagine Cowley's *Poems*. Overleap sixty years, and you are in the generation of which Pope asked, "Who now reads Cowley?" What works were ever expected with more impatience by the public than those of Lord Bolingbroke, which appeared, I think, in 1754. In 1814, no bookseller would have thanked you for the copyright of them all, if you had offered it to him for nothing. What would Paternoster Row give now for the copyright of Haley's *Triumphs of Temper*, so much admired within the memory of many people still living? I say, therefore, that, from the very nature of literary property, it will almost always pass away from an author's family; and I say that the price given for it to the family will bear a very small proportion to the tax which the purchaser, if his speculation turns out well, will in the course of a long series of years levy on the public.

If, Sir, I wished to find a strong and perfect illustration of the effect which I anticipate from long copyright, I should select,—my honorable and learned friend will be surprised,—I should select the case of Milton's granddaughter. As often as this bill has been under discussion, the fate of Milton's granddaughter has been brought forward by the advocates of monopoly. My honorable and learned friend has repeatedly told the story with great eloquence and effect. He has dilated on the sufferings, on the abject poverty of this ill-fated woman, the last of an illustrious race. He tells us that, in the extremity of her distress, Garrick gave her a benefit, that Johnson wrote a prologue, and that the public contributed some hundreds of pounds. Was it fit, he asks, that she should receive, in this eleemosynary form, a small portion of what was in

truth a debt? Why, he asks, instead of obtaining a pittance from charity did she not live in comfort and luxury on the proceeds of the sale of her ancestor's works? But, Sir, will my honorable and learned friend tell me that this event which he has so often and so pathetically described, was caused by the shortness of the term of copyright? Why, at that time, the duration of copyright was longer than even he, at present, proposes to make it. The monopoly lasted not sixty years, but for ever. At the time at which Milton's granddaughter asked charity, Milton's works were the exclusive property of a bookseller. Within a few months of the day on which the benefit was given at Garrick's theater, the holder of the copyright of *Paradise Lost*,—I think it was Tonson,—applied to the Court of Chancery for an injunction against a bookseller who had published a cheap edition of the great epic poem, and obtained the injunction. The representation of *Comus* was, if I remember rightly, in 1750; the injunction in 1752. Here, then, is a perfect illustration of the effect of long copyright. Milton's works are the property of a single publisher. Everybody who wants them must buy them at Tonson's shop, and at Tonson's price. Whoever attempts to undersell Tonson is harassed with legal proceedings. Thousands who would gladly possess a copy of *Paradise Lost*, must forego that great enjoyment. And what, in the meantime, is the situation of the only person for whom we can suppose that the author, protected at such a cost to the public, was at all interested? She is reduced to utter destitution. Milton's works are under a monopoly. Milton's granddaughter is starving. The reader is pillaged; but the writer's family is not enriched. Society is taxed doubly. It has to give an exorbitant price for the poems; and it has at the same time to give alms to the only surviving descendant of the poet.



But this is not all. I think it right, Sir, to call the attention of the House to an evil, which is perhaps more to be apprehended when an author's copyright remains in the hands of his family, than when it is transferred to book-sellers. I seriously fear that, if such a measure as this 5 should be adopted, many valuable works will be either totally suppressed or grievously mutilated. I can prove that this danger is not chimerical; and I am quite certain that, if the danger be real, the safeguards which my honorable and learned friend has devised are altogether nugatory. That the danger is not chimerical may easily be 10 shown. Most of us, I am sure, have known persons who, very erroneously, as I think, but from the best motives, would not choose to reprint Fielding's novels, or Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Some 15 gentlemen may perhaps be of the opinion, that it would be as well if *Tom Jones* and Gibbon's *History* were never reprinted. I will not, then, dwell on these or similar cases. I will take cases respecting which it is not likely that there will be any difference of opinion here; cases, too, in which 20 the danger of which I now speak is not matter of supposition, but matter of fact. Take Richardson's novels. Whatever I may, on the present occasion, think of my honorable and learned friend's judgment as a legislator, I must always respect his judgment as a critic. He will, I am sure, 25 say that Richardson's novels are among the most valuable, among the most original works in our language. No writings have done more to raise the fame of English genius in foreign countries. No writings are more deeply pathetic. No writings, those of Shakespeare excepted, show more 30 profound knowledge of the human heart. As to their moral tendency, I can cite the most respectable testimony. Dr. Johnson describes Richardson as one who has taught the passions to move at the command of virtue. My dear

and honored friend, Mr. Wilberforce, in his celebrated religious treatise, when speaking of the unchristian tendency of the fashionable novels of the eighteenth century distinctly excepts Richardson from the censure. Another  
5 excellent person, whom I cannot mention without respect and kindness, Mistress Hannah More, often declared in conversation, and has declared in one of her published poems, that she first learned from the writings of Richardson those principles of piety by which her life was guided.  
10 I may safely say that books celebrated as works of art through the whole civilized world, and praised for their moral tendency by Dr. Johnson, by Mr. Wilberforce, by Mistress Hannah More, ought not to be suppressed. Sir, it is my firm belief, that if the law had been what my honorable  
15 and learned friend proposes to make it, they would have been suppressed. I remember Richardson's grandson well; he was a clergyman in the city of London; he was a most upright and excellent man; but he had conceived a strong prejudice against works of fiction. He  
20 thought all novel-reading not only frivolous but sinful. He said,—this I state on the authority of one of his clerical brethren who is now a bishop,—he said that he had never thought it right to read one of his grandfather's books. Suppose, Sir, that the law had been what my honorable  
25 and learned friend would make it. Suppose that the copyright of Richardson's novels had descended, as might well have been the case, to this gentleman. I firmly believe that he would have thought it sinful to give them a wide circulation. I firmly believe that he would not for a hun-  
30 dred thousand pounds have deliberately done what he thought sinful. He would not have reprinted them. And what protection does my honorable and learned friend give to the public in such a case? Why, Sir, what he proposes is this: if a book is not reprinted during five years,

any person who wishes to reprint it may give notice in the *London Gazette*: the advertisement must be repeated three times; a year must elapse; and then, if the proprietor of the copyright does not put forth a new edition, he loses his exclusive privilege. Now, what protection is this to the public? What is a new edition? Does the law define the number of copies that make an edition? Does it limit the price of a copy? Are twelve copies on large paper, charged at thirty guineas each, an edition? It has been usual, when monopolies have been granted, to prescribe numbers and to limit prices. But I do not find that my honorable and learned friend proposes to do so in the present case. And, without some such provision, the security which he offers is manifestly illusory. It is my conviction that, under such a system as that which he recommends to us, a copy of *Clarissa* would have been as rare as an Aldus or a Caxton.

I will give another instance. One of the most instructive, interesting, and delightful books in our language is Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. Now it is well known that Boswell's eldest son considered this book, considered the whole relation of Boswell to Johnson, as a blot in the escutcheon of the family. He thought, not perhaps altogether without reason, that his father had exhibited himself in a ludicrous and degrading light. And thus he became so sore and irritable that at last he could not bear to hear the *Life of Johnson* mentioned. Suppose that the law had been what my honorable and learned friend wishes to make it. Suppose that the copyright of Boswell's *Life of Johnson* had belonged, as it well might, during sixty years, to Boswell's eldest son. What would have been the consequence? An unadulterated copy of the finest biographical work in the world would have been as scarce as the first edition of Camden's *Britannia*.

These are strong cases. I have shown you that, if the law had been what you are now going to make it, the finest prose work of fiction in the language, the finest biographical work in the language, would very probably have been suppressed. But I have stated my case weakly. The books which I have mentioned are singularly inoffensive books, books not touching on any of those questions which drive even wise men beyond the bounds of wisdom. There are books of a very different kind, books which are the rallying points of great political and religious parties. What is likely to happen if the copyright of one of these books should by descent or transfer come into the possession of some hostile zealot? I will take a single instance. It is only fifty years since John Wesley died; and all his works, if the law had been what my honorable and learned friend wishes to make it, would now have been the property of some person or other. The sect founded by Wesley is the most numerous, the wealthiest, the most powerful, the most zealous of sects. In every parliamentary election it is a matter of the greatest importance to obtain the support of the Wesleyan Methodists. Their numerical strength is reckoned by hundreds of thousands. They hold the memory of their founder in the greatest reverence; and not without reason, for he was unquestionably a great and a good man. To his authority they constantly appeal. His works are in their eyes of the highest value. His doctrinal writings they regard as containing the best system of theology ever deduced from Scripture. His journals, interesting even to the common reader, are peculiarly interesting to the Methodist: for they contain the whole history of that singular polity which, weak and despised in its beginning, is now, after the lapse of a century, so strong, so flourishing, and so formidable. The hymns to which he gave his imprimatur are a most important part

of the public worship of his followers. Now, suppose that the copyright of these works should belong to some person who holds the memory of Wesley and the doctrines and discipline of the Methodists in abhorrence. There are many such persons. The Ecclesiastical courts are at this very time sitting on the case of a clergyman of the Established Church who refused Christian burial to a child baptized by a Methodist preacher. I took up the other day a work which is considered as among the most respectable organs of a large and growing party in the Church of England, and there I saw John Wesley designated as a forsworn priest. Suppose that the works of Wesley were suppressed. Why, Sir, such a grievance would be enough to shake the foundation of government. Let gentlemen who are attached to the Church reflect for a moment what their feelings would be if the *Book of Common Prayer* were not to be reprinted for thirty or forty years, if the price of a *Book of Common Prayer* were run up to five or ten guineas. And then let them determine whether they will pass a law under which it is possible, under which it is probable, that so intolerable a wrong may be done to some sect consisting perhaps of half a million persons.

I am so sensible, Sir, of the kindness with which the House has listened to me, that I will not detain you longer. I will only say this, that if the measure before us should pass, and should produce one tenth part of the evil which it is calculated to produce, and which I fully expect it to produce, there will soon be a remedy, though of a very objectionable kind. Just as the absurd acts which prohibited the sale of game were virtually repealed by the poacher, just as many absurd revenue acts have been virtually repealed by the smuggler, so will this law be virtually repealed by piratical booksellers. At present the holder



of copyright has the public feeling on his side. Those who invade copyright are regarded as knaves who take the bread out of the mouths of deserving men. Everybody is well pleased to see them restrained by the law, and compelled to refund their ill-gotten gains. No tradesman of good repute will have anything to do with such disgraceful transactions. Pass this law: and that feeling is at an end. Men very different from the present race of piratical booksellers will soon infringe this intolerable monopoly. Great masses of capital will be constantly employed in the violation of the law. Every art will be employed to evade legal pursuit; and the whole nation will be in the plot. On which side, indeed, should the public sympathy be when the question is whether some book as popular as *Robinson Crusoe*, or the *Pilgrim's Progress*, shall be in every cottage, or whether it shall be confined to the libraries of the rich for the advantage of the great grandson of a bookseller, who, a hundred years before, drove a hard bargain for the copyright with the author when in great distress? Remember too that, when once it ceases to be considered as wrong and discreditable to invade literary property, no person can say where the invasion will stop. The public seldom makes nice distinctions. The wholesome copyright which now exists will share in the disgrace and danger of the new copyright which you are about to create. And you will find that, in attempting to impose unreasonable restraints on the reprinting of the works of the dead, you have, to a great extent, annulled those restraints which now prevent men from pillaging and defrauding the living. If I saw, Sir, any probability that this bill could be so amended in the Committee that my objections might be removed, I would not divide the House in this stage. But I am so fully convinced that no alteration which would not seem insupportable to my

honorable and learned friend, could render his measure supportable to me, that I must move, though with regret, that this bill be read a second time this day six months.

SECOND SPEECH ON COPYRIGHT  
DELIVERED IN  
A COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS  
APRIL 6, 1842

MR. GREENE: I have been amused and gratified by the remarks which my noble friend has made on the arguments by which I prevailed on the last House of Commons to reject the bill introduced by a very able and accomplished  
5 man, Mr. Serjeant Talfourd. My noble friend has done me a high and rare honor. For this is, I believe, the first occasion on which a speech made in one Parliament has been answered in another. I should not find it difficult to vindicate the soundness of the reasons which I formerly  
10 urged, to set them in a clearer light, and to fortify them by additional facts. But it seems to me that we had better discuss the bill which is now on our table than the bill which was there fourteen months ago. Glad I am to find that there is a very wide difference between the two bills,  
15 and that my noble friend, though he has tried to refute my arguments, has acted as if he had been convinced by them. I objected to the term of sixty years as far too long. My noble friend has cut that term down to twenty-five years. I warned the House that, under the provisions of Mr. Serjeant Talfourd's bill, valuable works might not improbably  
20 be suppressed by the representatives of authors. My noble friend has prepared a clause which, as he thinks, will guard against that danger. I will not therefore waste the time of the Committee by debating points which he has con-



ceded, but will proceed at once to the proper business of this evening.

Sir, I have no objection to the principle of my noble friend's bill. Indeed, I had no objection to the principle of the bill of last year. I have long thought that the term of copyright ought to be extended. When Mr. Serjeant Talfourd moved for leave to bring in his bill, I did not oppose the motion. Indeed, I meant to vote for the second reading, and to reserve what I had to say for the Committee. But the learned Serjeant left me no choice. He, in strong language, begged that nobody who was disposed to reduce the term of sixty years would divide with him. "Do not," he said, "give me your support if all that you mean to grant to men of letters is a miserable addition of fourteen or fifteen years to the present term. I do not wish for such support. I despise it." Not wishing to obtrude on the learned Serjeant a support which he despised, I had no course left but to take the sense of the House on the second reading. The circumstances are now different. My noble friend's bill is not at present a good bill; but it may be improved into a very good bill; nor will he, I am persuaded, withdraw it if it should be so improved. He and I have the same object in view; but we differ as to the best mode of attaining that object. We are equally desirous to extend the protection now enjoyed by writers. In what way it may be extended with most benefit to them and with least inconvenience to the public, is the question.

The present state of the law is this. The author of a work has a certain copyright in that work for a term of twenty-eight years. If he should live more than twenty-eight years after the publication of the work, he retains the copyright to the end of his life.

My noble friend does not propose to make any addition to the term of twenty-eight years. But he proposes that

the copyright shall last twenty-five years after the author's death. Thus my noble friend makes no addition to that term which is certain, but makes a very large addition to that term which is uncertain.

5 My plan is different. I would make no addition to the uncertain term; but I would make a large addition to the certain term. I propose to add fourteen years to the twenty-eight years which the law now allows an author. His copyright will, in this way, last till his death, or till  
10 the expiration of forty-two years, whichever shall first happen. And I think that I shall be able to prove to the satisfaction of the Committee that my plan will be more beneficial to literature and to literary men than the plan of my noble friend.

15 It must surely, Sir, be admitted that the protection which we give to books ought to be distributed as evenly as possible, that every book should have a fair share of that protection, and no book more than a fair share. It would evidently be absurd to put tickets into a wheel,  
20 with different numbers marked upon them, and to make writers draw, one a term of twenty-eight years, another a term of fifty, another a term of ninety. And yet this sort of lottery is what my noble friend proposes to establish. I know that we cannot altogether exclude chance. You  
25 have two terms of copyright; one certain, the other uncertain; and we cannot, I admit, get rid of the uncertain term. It is proper, no doubt, that an author's copyright should last during his life. But, Sir, though we cannot altogether exclude chance, we can very much diminish  
30 the share which chance must have in distributing the recompense which we wish to give to genius and learning. By every addition which we make to the certain term, we diminish the influence of chance; by every addition which we make to the uncertain term, we increase the influence

of chance. I shall make myself best understood by putting cases. Take two eminent female writers who died within our own memory, Madame D'Arblay and Miss Austen. As the law now stands, Miss Austen's charming novels would have only from twenty-eight to thirty-three years 5 of copyright. For that extraordinary woman died young: she died before her genius was fully appreciated by the world. Madame D'Arblay outlived the whole generation to which she belonged. The copyright of her celebrated novel, *Evelina*, lasted, under the present law, sixty-two 10 years. Surely this inequality is sufficiently great, sixty-two years of copyright for *Evelina*, only twenty-eight for *Persuasion*. But to my noble friend this inequality seems not great enough. He proposes to add twenty-five years to Madame D'Arblay's term, and not a single day to Miss 15 Austen's term. He would give to *Persuasion* a copyright of only twenty-eight years, as at present, and to *Evelina* a copyright of eighty-seven years. Now, is this reasonable? See, on the other hand, the operation of my plan. I make no addition at all to Madame D'Arblay's term of sixty-two 20 years, which is, in my opinion, quite long enough; but I extend Miss Austen's term to forty-two years, which is, in my opinion, not too much. You see, Sir, that at present chance has too much sway in this matter; that at present the protection which the state gives to letters is very un- 25 equally given. You see that if my noble friend's plan be adopted, more will be left to chance than under the present system, and you will have such inequalities as are unknown under the present system. You see also that, under the system which I recommend, we shall have, not perfect cer- 30 tainty, not perfect equality, but much less uncertainty and inequality than at present.

But this is not all. My noble friend's plan is not merely to institute a lottery in which some writers will draw prizes

and some will draw blanks. It is much worse than this. His lottery is so contrived that, in the vast majority of cases, the blanks will fall to the best books, and the prizes to books of inferior merit.

- 5 Take Shakespeare. My noble friend gives a longer protection than I should give to *Love's Labour's Lost*, and *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*; but he gives a shorter protection than I should give to *Othello* and *Macbeth*.

- Take Milton. Milton died in 1674. The copyrights of  
10 Milton's great works would, according to my noble friend's plan, expire in 1699. *Comus* appeared in 1634, the *Paradise Lost* in 1668. To *Comus*, then, my noble friend would give sixty-five years of copyright, and to the *Paradise Lost* only thirty-one years. Is that reasonable? *Comus* is a  
15 noble poem: but who would rank it with the *Paradise Lost*? My plan would give forty-two years both to the *Paradise Lost* and to *Comus*.

- Let us pass on from Milton to Dryden. My noble friend would give more than sixty years of copyright to Dryden's  
20 worst works; to the encomiastic verses on Oliver Cromwell, to the *Wild Gallant*, to the *Rival Ladies*, to the other wretched pieces as bad as anything written by Flecknoe or Settle: but for *Theodore and Honoria*, for *Tancred and Sigismunda*, for *Cimon and Iphigenia*, for *Palamon and*  
25 *Arcite*, for *Alexander's Feast*, my noble friend thinks a copyright of twenty-eight years sufficient. Of all Pope's works, that to which my noble friend would give the largest measure of protection is the volume of *Pastorals*, remarkable only as the production of a boy. Johnson's first work  
30 was a *Translation of a Book of Travels in Abyssinia*, published in 1735. It was so poorly executed that in his later years he did not like to hear it mentioned. Boswell once picked up a copy of it, and told his friend that he had done so. "Do not talk about it," said Johnson; "it is a thing

to be forgotten." To this performance my noble friend would give protection during the enormous term of seventy-five years. To *The Lives of the Poets* he would give protection during about thirty years. Well; take Henry Fielding; it matters not whom I take, but take Fielding. His early works are read only by the curious, and would not be read even by the curious, but for the fame which he acquired in the later part of his life by works of a very different kind. What is the value of the *Temple Beau*, of the *Intriguing Chambermaid*, of half a dozen other plays of which few gentlemen have even heard the names? Yet to these worthless pieces my noble friend would give a term of copyright longer by more than twenty years than that which he would give to *Tom Jones* and *Amelia*.

Go on to Burke. His little tract, entitled the *Vindication of Natural Society*, is certainly not without merit; but it would not be remembered in our days if it did not bear the name of Burke. To this tract my noble friend would give a copyright of near seventy years. But to the great work on the French Revolution, to the *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*, to the letters on the *Regicide Peace*, he would give a copyright of thirty years or little more.

And, Sir, observe that I am not selecting here and there extraordinary instances in order to make up the semblance of a case. I am taking the greatest names of our literature in chronological order. Go to other nations; go to remote ages; you will still find the general rule the same. There was no copyright at Athens or Rome; but the history of the Greek and Latin literature illustrates my argument quite as well as if copyright had existed in ancient times. Of all the plays of Sophocles, the one to which the plan of my noble friend would have given the most scanty recompense would have been that wonderful masterpiece, the *Ædipus at Colonos*. Who would class together the



*Speech of Demosthenes against his Guardians*, and the *Speech for the Crown*? My noble friend, indeed, would not class them together. For to the *Speech against the Guardians* he would give a copyright of near seventy years: and to the  
5 incomparable *Speech for the Crown* a copyright of less than half that length. Go to Rome. My noble friend would give more than twice as long a term to Cicero's juvenile declamation in defence of Roscius Amerinus as to the *Second Philippic*. Go to France. My noble friend would  
10 give a far longer term to Racine's *Frères Ennemis* than to *Athalie*, and to Molière's *Etourdi* than to *Tartuffe*. Go to Spain. My noble friend would give a longer term to forgotten works of Cervantes, works which nobody now reads, than to *Don Quixote*. Go to Germany. According  
15 to my noble friend's plan, of all the works of Schiller the *Robbers* would be the most favored; of all the works of Goethe, the *Sorrows of Werther* would be the most favored.

I thank the Committee for listening so kindly to this long enumeration. Gentlemen will perceive, I am sure,  
20 that it is not from pedantry that I mention the names of so many books and authors. But just as, in our debates on civil affairs, we constantly draw illustrations from civil history, we must, in a debate about literary property, draw our illustrations from literary history. Now, Sir, I have,  
25 I think, shown from literary history that the effect of my noble friend's plan would be to give to crude and imperfect works, to third-rate and fourth-rate works, a great advantage over the highest productions of genius. It is impossible to account for the facts which I have laid before  
30 you by attributing them to mere accident. Their number is too great, their character too uniform. We must seek for some other explanation; and we shall easily find one.

It is the law of our nature that the mind shall attain its full power by slow degrees; and this is especially true of the

most vigorous minds. Young men, no doubt, have often produced works of great merit; but it would be impossible to name any writer of the first order whose juvenile performances were his best. That all the most valuable books of history, of philology, of physical and metaphysical science, of divinity, of political economy, have been produced by men of mature years will hardly be disputed. The case may not be quite so clear as respects works of the imagination. And yet I know no work of the imagination of the very highest class that was ever, in any age or country, produced by a man under thirty-five. Whatever powers a youth may have received from nature, it is impossible that his taste and judgment can be ripe, that his mind can be richly stored with images, that he can have observed the vicissitudes of life, that he can have studied the nicer shades of character. How, as Marmontel very sensibly said, is a person to paint portraits who has never seen faces? On the whole, I believe that I may, without fear of contradiction, affirm this, that of the good books now extant in the world more than nineteen-twentieths were published after the writers had attained the age of forty. If this be so, it is evident that the plan of my noble friend is framed on a vicious principle. For, while he gives to juvenile productions a very much larger protection than they now enjoy, he does comparatively little for the works of men in the full maturity of their powers, and absolutely nothing for any work which is published during the last three years of the life of the writer. For, by the existing law, the copyright of such a work lasts twenty-eight years from the publication; and my noble friend gives only twenty-five years to be reckoned from the writer's death.

What I recommend is, that the certain term, reckoned from the date of publication, shall be forty-two years instead of twenty-eight years. In this arrangement there



is no uncertainty, no inequality. The advantage which I propose to give will be the same to every book. No work will have so long a copyright as my noble friend gives to some books, or so short a copyright as he gives to others.

5 No copyright will last ninety years. No copyright will end in twenty-eight years. To every book published in the course of the last seventeen years of a writer's life I give a longer term of copyright than my noble friend gives; and I am confident that no person versed in literary history

10 will deny this,—that in general the most valuable works of an author are published in the course of the last seventeen years of his life. I will rapidly enumerate a few, and but a few, of the great works of English writers to which my plan is more favorable than my noble friend's plan. To

15 *Lear*, to *Macbeth*, to *Othello*, to the *Fairy Queen*, to the *Paradise Lost*, to *Bacon's Novum Organum*, and *De Augmentis*, to *Locke's Essay on the Human Understanding*, to *Clarendon's History*, to *Hume's History*, to *Gibbon's History*, to *Smith's Wealth of Nations*, to *Addison's Spectators*,

20 to almost all the great works of *Burke*, to *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison*, to *Joseph Andrews*, *Tom Jones* and *Amelia*, and, with the single exception of *Waverley*, to all the novels of *Sir Walter Scott*, I give a longer term of copyright than my noble friend gives. Can he match that list?

25 Does not that list contain what England has produced greatest in many various ways, poetry, philosophy, history, eloquence, wit, skilful portraiture of life and manners? I confidently, therefore, call on the Committee to take my plan in preference to the plan of my noble friend.

30 I have shown that the protection which he proposes to give to letters is unequal, and unequal in the worst way. I have shown that his plan is to give protection to books in inverse proportion to their merit. I shall move, when we come to the third clause of the bill, to omit the words

“twenty-five years;” and in a subsequent part of the same clause I shall move to substitute for the words “twenty-eight years” the words “forty-two years.” I earnestly hope that the Committee will adopt these amendments; and I feel the firmest conviction that my noble friend’s 5 bill, so amended, will confer a great boon on men of letters with the smallest possible inconvenience to the public.



LINCOLN'S ADDRESSES AND LETTERS



St. Gaudens' Statue of Lincoln

## SPEECH DELIVERED AT PEORIA, ILLINOIS

OCTOBER 16, 1854

BUT one great argument in support of the repeal of the Missouri Compromise is still to come. That argument is "the sacred right of self-government." It seems our distinguished Senator has found great difficulty in getting his antagonists, even in the Senate, to meet him fairly on this argument. Some poet has said: 5

"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

At the hazard of being thought one of the fools of this quotation, I meet that argument—I rush in—I take that bull by the horns. I trust I understand and truly estimate the right of self-government. My faith in the proposition that each man should do precisely as he pleases with all which is exclusively his own lies at the foundation of the sense of justice there is in me. I extend the principle to communities of men as well as to individuals. I so extend it because it is politically wise, as well as naturally just; politically wise in saving us from broils about matters which do not concern us. Here, or at Washington, I would not trouble myself with the oyster laws of Virginia, or the cranberry laws of Indiana. The doctrine of self-government is right,—absolutely and eternally right,—but it has no just application as here attempted. Or perhaps I should rather say that whether it has such application depends upon whether a negro is not or is a man. If he is not a man, in that case he who is a man may as a matter of self-government do just what he pleases with him. But if the negro is a man, is it not to that extent a total destruction 25

of self-government to say that he too shall not govern himself? When the white man governs himself, that is self-government; but when he governs himself, and also governs another man, that is more than self-government—  
5 that is despotism. If the negro is a man, why then my ancient faith teaches me that “all men are created equal,” and that there can be no moral right in connection with one man’s making a slave of another.

Judge Douglas frequently, with bitter irony and sarcasm, paraphrases our argument by saying: “The white  
10 people of Nebraska are good enough to govern themselves, but they are not good enough to govern a few miserable negroes.”

Well, I doubt not that the people of Nebraska are and  
15 will continue to be as good as the average of people elsewhere. I do not say the contrary. What I do say is that no man is good enough to govern another man without that other’s consent. I say this is the leading principle, the sheet-anchor of American republicanism. Our Declaration of Independence says:

“We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these  
25 rights, governments are instituted among men, *deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.*”

I have quoted so much at this time merely to show that, according to our ancient faith, the just powers of government are derived from the consent of the governed. Now  
30 the relation of master and slave is *pro tanto* a total violation of this principle. The master not only governs the slave without his consent, but he governs him by a set of rules altogether different from those which he prescribes for himself. Allow all the governed an equal voice



in the government, and that, and that only, is self-government.

Let it not be said I am contending for the establishment of political and social equality between the whites and blacks. I have already said the contrary. I am not combating the argument of necessity, arising from the fact that the blacks are already among us; but I am combating what is set up as a moral argument for allowing them to be taken where they have never yet been—arguing against the extension of a bad thing, which, where it already exists, we must of necessity manage as we best can. 5 10

In support of his application of the doctrine of self-government, Senator Douglas has sought to bring to his aid the opinions and examples of our Revolutionary fathers. I am glad he has done this. I love the sentiments of those old-time men, and shall be most happy to abide by their opinions. He shows us that when it was in contemplation for the colonies to break off from Great Britain, and set up a new government for themselves, several of the States instructed their delegates to go for the measure, provided each State should be allowed to regulate its domestic concerns in its own way. I do not quote; but this in substance. This was right; I see nothing objectionable in it. I also think it probable that it had some reference to the existence of slavery among them. I will not deny that it had. But had it any reference to the carrying of slavery into new countries? That is the question, and we will let the fathers themselves answer it. 15 20 25

This same generation of men, and mostly the same individuals of the generation who declared this principle, who declared independence, who fought the war of the Revolution through, who afterward made the Constitution under which we still live—these same men passed the Ordinance of '87, declaring that slavery should never go 30

to the Northwest Territory. I have no doubt Judge Douglas thinks they were very inconsistent in this. It is a question of discrimination between them and him. But there is not an inch of ground left for his claiming that their  
5 opinions, their example, their authority, are on his side in the controversy.

Again, is not Nebraska, while a Territory, a part of us? Do we not own the country? And if we surrender the control of it, do we not surrender the right of self-government?  
10 It is part of ourselves. If you say we shall not control it, because it is only part, the same is true of every other part; and when all the parts are gone, what has become of the whole? What is then left of us? What use for the General Government, when there is nothing left for it to  
15 govern?

But you say this question should be left to the people of Nebraska, because they are more particularly interested. If this be the rule, you must leave it to each individual to say for himself whether he will have slaves. What better  
20 moral right have thirty-one citizens of Nebraska to say that the thirty-second shall not hold slaves than the people of the thirty-one States have to say that slavery shall not go into the thirty-second State at all?

But if it is a sacred right for the people of Nebraska to  
25 take and hold slaves there, it is equally their sacred right to buy them where they can buy them cheapest; and that, undoubtedly, will be on the coast of Africa, provided you will consent not to hang them for going there to buy them. You must remove this restriction, too, from the sacred  
30 right of self-government. I am aware, you say, that taking slaves from the States to Nebraska does not make slaves of freemen; but the African slave-trader can say just as much. He does not catch free negroes and bring them here. He finds them already slaves in the hands of their black cap-

tors, and he honestly buys them at the rate of a red cotton handkerchief a head. This is very cheap, and it is a great abridgment of the sacred right of self-government to hang men for engaging in this profitable trade.

Another important objection to this application of the right of self-government is that it enables the first few to deprive the succeeding many of a free exercise of the right of self-government. The first few may get slavery in, and the subsequent many cannot easily get it out. How common is the remark now in the slave States, "If we were only clear of our slaves, how much better it would be for us." They are actually deprived of the privilege of governing themselves as they would, by the action of a very few in the beginning. The same thing was true of the whole nation at the time our Constitution was formed.

Whether slavery shall go into Nebraska, or other new Territories, is not a matter of exclusive concern to the people who may go there. The whole nation is interested that the best use shall be made of these Territories. We want them for homes of free white people. This they cannot be, to any considerable extent, if slavery shall be planted within them. Slave States are places for poor white people to remove from, not to remove to. New free States are the places for poor people to go to, and better their condition. For this use the nation needs these Territories.

Still further: there are constitutional relations between the slave and free States which are degrading to the latter. We are under legal obligations to catch and return their runaway slaves to them: a sort of dirty, disagreeable job, which, I believe, as a general rule, the slaveholders will not perform for one another. Then again, in the control of the government—the management of the partnership affairs—they have greatly the advantage of us. By the

Constitution each State has two senators, each has a number of representatives in proportion to the number of its people, and each has a number of presidential electors equal to the whole number of senators and representatives  
5 together. But in ascertaining the number of the people for this purpose, five slaves are counted as being equal to three whites. The slaves do not vote; they are only counted and so used as to swell the influence of the white people's votes. The practical effect of this is more aptly  
10 shown by a comparison of the States of South Carolina and Maine. South Carolina has six representatives, and so has Maine; South Carolina has eight presidential electors, and so has Maine. This is precise equality so far; and of course they are equal in senators, each having  
15 two. Thus in the control of the government the two States are equals precisely. But how are they in the number of their white people? Maine has 581,813, while South Carolina has 274,567; Maine has twice as many as South Carolina, and 32,679 over. Thus, each white man in  
20 South Carolina is more than the double of any man in Maine. This is all because South Carolina, besides her free people, has 384,984 slaves. The South Carolinian has precisely the same advantage over the white man in every other free State as well as in Maine. He is more than the  
25 double of any one of us in this crowd. The same advantage, but not to the same extent, is held by all the citizens of the slave States over those of the free; and it is an absolute truth, without an exception, that there is no voter in any slave State but who has more legal power in the  
30 government than any voter in any free State. There is no instance of exact equality; and the disadvantage is against us the whole chapter through. This principle, in the aggregate, gives the slave States in the present Congress twenty additional representatives, being seven more

than the whole majority by which they passed the Nebraska Bill.

Now all this is manifestly unfair; yet I do not mention it to complain of it, in so far as it is already settled. It is in the Constitution, and I do not for that cause, or any other cause, propose to destroy, or alter, or disregard the Constitution. I stand to it, fairly, fully, and firmly. 5

But when I am told I must leave it altogether to other people to say whether new partners are to be bred up and brought into the firm, on the same degrading terms against me, I respectfully demur. I insist that whether I shall be a whole man, or only the half of one, in comparison with others, is a question in which I am somewhat concerned, and one which no other man can have a sacred right of deciding for me. If I am wrong in this—if it really be a sacred right of self-government in the man who shall go to Nebraska to decide whether he will be the equal of me or the double of me, then, after he shall have exercised that right, and thereby shall have reduced me to a still smaller fraction of a man than I already am, I should like for some gentleman, deeply skilled in the mysteries of sacred rights, to provide himself with a microscope, and peep about, and find out, if he can, what has become of my sacred rights. They will surely be too small for detection with the naked eye. 10 15 20 25

Finally, I insist that if there is anything which it is the duty of the whole people to never intrust to any hands but their own, that thing is the preservation and perpetuity of their own liberties and institutions. And if they shall think, as I do, that the extension of slavery endangers them more than any or all other causes, how recreant to themselves if they submit the question, and with it the fate of their country, to a mere handful of men bent only on self-interest. If this question of slavery extension were 30

an insignificant one—one having no power to do harm—it might be shuffled aside in this way; and being, as it is, the great Behemoth of danger, shall the strong grip of the nation be loosened upon him, to intrust him to the hands  
5 of such feeble keepers?

I have done with this mighty argument of self-government. Go, sacred thing! Go in peace.

But Nebraska is urged as a great Union-saving measure. Well, I too go for saving the Union. Much as I hate slavery,  
10 ery, I would consent to the extension of it rather than see the Union dissolved, just as I would consent to any great evil to avoid a greater one. But when I go to Union-saving, I must believe, at least, that the means I employ have some adaptation to the end. To my mind, Nebraska  
15 has no such adaptation.

“It hath no relish of salvation in it.”

It is an aggravation, rather, of the only one thing which ever endangers the Union. When it came upon us, all was peace and quiet. The nation was looking to the forming of  
20 new bonds of union, and a long course of peace and prosperity seemed to lie before us. In the whole range of possibility, there scarcely appears to me to have been anything out of which the slavery agitation could have been revived, except the very project of repealing the Missouri  
25 Compromise. Every inch of territory we owned already had a definite settlement of the slavery question, by which all parties were pledged to abide. Indeed, there was no uninhabited country on the continent which we could acquire, if we except some extreme northern regions which  
30 are wholly out of the question.

In this state of affairs the Genius of Discord himself could scarcely have invented a way of again setting us by the ears but by turning back and destroying the peace



measures of the past. The counsels of that Genius seem to have prevailed. The Missouri Compromise was repealed; and here we are in the midst of a new slavery agitation, such, I think, as we have never seen before. Who is responsible for this? Is it those who resist the measure, or those who causelessly brought it forward and pressed it through, having reason to know, and in fact knowing, it must and would be so resisted? It could not but be expected by its author that it would be looked upon as a measure for the extension of slavery, aggravated by a gross breach of faith. 5 10

Argue as you will and long as you will, this is the naked front and aspect of the measure. And in this aspect it could not but produce agitation. Slavery is founded in the selfishness of man's nature—opposition to it in his love of justice. These principles are an eternal antagonism, and when brought into collision so fiercely as slavery extension brings them, shocks and throes and convulsions must ceaselessly follow. Repeal the Missouri Compromise, repeal all compromises, repeal the Declaration of Independence, 15 20 repeal all past history, you still cannot repeal human nature. It still will be the abundance of man's heart that slavery extension is wrong, and out of the abundance of his heart his mouth will continue to speak.



A SPEECH DELIVERED AT SPRINGFIELD,  
ILLINOIS, AT THE REPUBLICAN STATE  
CONVENTION

JUNE 17, 1858

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN OF THE CONVENTION:

If we could first know where we are and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it. We are now far into the fifth year since a policy was initiated with the avowed object and confident promise of putting an end to slavery agitation. Under the operation of that policy, that agitation has not only not ceased, but has constantly augmented. In my opinion, it will not cease until a crisis shall have been reached and passed.  
10 "A house divided against itself cannot stand." I believe this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the  
15 other. Either the opponents of slavery will arrest the further spread of it, and place it where the public mind shall rest in the belief that it is in the course of ultimate extinction; or its advocates will push it forward till it shall become alike lawful in all the States, old as well as new,  
20 North as well as South.

Have we no tendency to the latter condition?

Let any one who doubts carefully contemplate that now most complete legal combination—piece of machinery, so to speak—compounded of the Nebraska doctrine and the  
25 Dred Scott decision. Let him consider not only what work the machinery is adapted to do, and how well adapted; but

also let him study the history of its construction, and trace, if he can, or rather fail, if he can, to trace the evidences of design and concert of action among its chief architects, from the beginning.

The new year of 1854 found slavery excluded from more than half the States by State constitutions, and from most of the national territory by congressional prohibition. Four days later commenced the struggle which ended in repealing that congressional prohibition. This opened all the national territory to slavery, and was the first point gained.

But, so far, Congress only had acted; and an indorsement by the people, real or apparent, was indispensable to save the point already gained and give chance for more.

This necessity had not been overlooked, but had been provided for, as well as might be, in the notable argument of "squatter sovereignty," otherwise called "sacred right of self-government," which latter phrase, though expressive of the only rightful basis of any government, was so perverted in this attempted use of it as to amount to just this: That if any one man choose to enslave another, no third man shall be allowed to object. That argument was incorporated into the Nebraska bill itself, in the language which follows: "It being the true intent and meaning of this act not to legislate slavery into any Territory or State, nor to exclude it therefrom; but to leave the people thereof perfectly free to form and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States." Then opened the roar of loose declamation in favor of "squatter sovereignty" and "sacred right of self-government." "But," said opposition members, "let us amend the bill so as to expressly declare that the people of the Territory may exclude slavery." "Not

we," said the friends of the measure; and down they voted the amendment.

While the Nebraska bill was passing through Congress, a law case involving the question of a negro's freedom, by reason of his owner having voluntarily taken him first into a free State and then into a Territory covered by the congressional prohibition, and held him as a slave for a long time in each, was passing through the United States Circuit Court for the District of Missouri; and both Nebraska bill and law suit were brought to a decision in the same month of May, 1854. The negro's name was Dred Scott, which name now designates the decision finally made in the case. Before the then next presidential election, the law case came to and was argued in the Supreme Court of the United States; but the decision of it was deferred until after the election. Still, before the election, Senator Trumbull, on the floor of the Senate, requested the leading advocate of the Nebraska bill to state his opinion whether the people of a Territory can constitutionally exclude slavery from their limits; and the latter answered: "That is a question for the Supreme Court."

The election came. Mr. Buchanan was elected, and the indorsement, such as it was, secured. That was the second point gained. The indorsement, however, fell short of a clear popular majority by nearly four hundred thousand votes, and so, perhaps, was not overwhelmingly reliable and satisfactory. The outgoing President, in his last annual message, as impressively as possible echoed back upon the people the weight and authority of the indorsement! The Supreme Court met again; did not announce their decision, but ordered a reargument. The presidential inauguration came, and still no decision of the court; but the incoming President in his inaugural address fervently exhorted the people to abide by the forthcoming decision,

whatever it might be. Then in a few days came the decision.

The reputed author of the Nebraska bill finds an early occasion to make a speech at this capital indorsing the Dred Scott decision, and vehemently denouncing all opposition to it. The new President, too, seizes the early occasion of the Silliman letter to indorse and strongly construe that decision, and to express his astonishment that any different view had ever been entertained. 5

At length a squabble springs up between the President and the author of the Nebraska bill, on the mere question of fact, whether the Lecompton constitution was or was not, in any just sense, made by the people of Kansas; and in that quarrel, he latter declares that all he wants is a fair vote for the people, and that he cares not whether slavery be voted down or voted up. I do not understand his declaration that he cares not whether slavery be voted down or voted up to be intended by him other than as an apt definition of the policy he would impress upon the public mind—the principle for which he declares he has suffered so much, and is ready to suffer to the end. And well may he cling to that principle. If he has any parental feeling, well may he cling to it. That principle is the only shred left of his original Nebraska doctrine. Under the Dred Scott decision, “squatter sovereignty” squatted out of existence, tumbled down like temporary scaffolding—like the mold at the foundry, served through one blast, and fell back into loose sand,—helped to carry an election, and then was kicked to the winds. His late joint struggle with the Republicans against the Lecompton constitution involves nothing of the original Nebraska doctrine. That struggle was made on a point—the right of a people to make their own constitution—upon which he and the Republicans have never differed. 15 20 25 30

The several points of the Dred Scott decision, in connection with Senator Douglas's "care not" policy, constitute the piece of machinery in its present state of advancement. This was the third point gained. The  
5 working points of that machinery are:

(1) That no negro slave, imported as such from Africa, and no descendant of such slave, can ever be a citizen of any State, in the sense of that term as used in the Constitution of the United States. This point is made in order  
10 to deprive the negro in every possible event of the benefit of that provision of the United States Constitution which declares that "the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all the privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States."

(2) That "subject to the Constitution of the United States," neither Congress nor a territorial legislature can exclude slavery from any United States Territory. This point is made in order that individual men may fill up the Territories with slaves, without danger of losing them as  
20 property, and thus enhance the chances of permanency to the institution through all the future.

(3) That whether the holding a negro in actual slavery in a free State makes him free as against the holder, the United States courts will not decide, but will leave to be  
25 decided by the courts of any slave State the negro may be forced into by the master. This point is made not to be pressed immediately, but, if acquiesced in for a while, and apparently indorsed by the people at an election, then to sustain the logical conclusion that what Dred Scott's  
30 master might lawfully do with Dred Scott in the free State of Illinois, every other master may lawfully do with any other one or one thousand slaves in Illinois or in any other free State.

Auxiliary to all this, and working hand-in-hand with it,

the Nebraska doctrine, or what is left of it, is to educate and mold public opinion, at least Northern public opinion, not to care whether slavery is voted down or voted up. This shows exactly where we now are, and partially, also, whither we are tending.

It will throw additional light on the latter, to go back and run the mind over the string of historical facts already stated. Several things will now appear less dark and mysterious than they did when they were transpiring. The people were to be left "perfectly free," "subject only to the Constitution." What the Constitution had to do with it outsiders could not then see. Plainly enough now, it was an exactly fitted niche for the Dred Scott decision to afterward come in, and declare the perfect freedom of the people to be just no freedom at all. Why was the amendment expressly declaring the right of the people voted down? Plainly enough now, the adoption of it would have spoiled the niche for the Dred Scott decision. Why was the court decision held up? Why even a senator's individual opinion withheld till after the presidential election? Plainly enough now, the speaking out then would have damaged the "perfectly free" argument upon which the election was to be carried. Why the outgoing President's felicitation on the indorsement? Why the delay of a reargument? Why the incoming President's advance exhortation in favor of the decision? These things look like the cautious patting and petting of a spirited horse preparatory to mounting him, when it is dreaded that he may give the rider a fall. And why the hasty after-indorsement of the decision by the President and others?

We cannot absolutely know that all these adaptations are the result of preconcert. But when we see a lot of framed timber, different portions of which we know have been gotten out at different times and places and by dif-



ferent workmen,—Stephen, Franklin, Roger, and James, for instance,—and we see those timbers joined together, and see they exactly make the frame of a house or a mill, all the tenons and mortices exactly fitting, and all the  
5 lengths and proportions of the different pieces exactly adapted to their respective place, and not a piece too many or too few, not omitting even scaffolding—or, if a single piece be lacking, we see the place in the frame exactly fitted and prepared yet to bring such piece in—in such a case  
10 we find it impossible not to believe that Stephen and Franklin and Roger and James all understood one another from the beginning, and all worked upon a common plan or draft drawn up before the first blow was struck.

It should not be overlooked that, by the Nebraska bill,  
15 the people of a State as well as Territory were to be left “perfectly free,” “subject only to the Constitution.” Why mention a State? They were legislating for Territories, and not for or about States. Certainly the people of a State are and ought to be subject to the Constitution  
20 of the United States; but why is mention of this lugged into this merely territorial law? Why are the people of a Territory and the people of a State therein lumped together, and their relation to the Constitution therein treated as being precisely the same? While the opinion of  
25 the court by Chief Justice Taney, in the Dred Scott case, and the separate opinions of all the concurring judges, expressly declare that the Constitution of the United States neither permits Congress nor a territorial legislature to exclude slavery from any United States Territory, they all omit to declare whether or not the same  
30 Constitution permits a State, or the people of a State, to exclude it. Possibly, this is a mere omission; but who can be quite sure, if McLean or Curtis had sought to get into the opinion a declaration of unlimited power in the people



of a State to exclude slavery from their limits, just as Chase and Mace sought to get such declaration, in behalf of the people of a Territory, into the Nebraska bill—I ask, who can be quite sure that it would not have been voted down in the one case as it had been in the other? The nearest approach to the point of declaring the power of a State over slavery is made by Judge Nelson. He approaches it more than once, using the precise idea, and almost the language, too, of the Nebraska act. On one occasion his exact language is: “Except in cases where the power is restrained by the Constitution of the United States, the law of the State is supreme over the subject of slavery within its jurisdiction.” In what cases the power of the State is so restrained by the United States Constitution is left an open question, precisely as the same question as to the restraint on the power of the Territories was left open in the Nebraska act. Put this and that together, and we have another nice little niche, which we may, ere long, see filled with another Supreme Court decision declaring that the Constitution of the United States does not permit a State to exclude slavery from its limits. And this may especially be expected if the doctrine of “care not whether slavery be voted down or voted up” shall gain upon the public mind sufficiently to give promise that such a decision can be maintained when made.

Such a decision is all that slavery now lacks of being alike lawful in all the States. Welcome, or unwelcome, such decision is probably coming, and will soon be upon us, unless the power of the present political dynasty shall be met and overthrown. We shall lie down pleasantly dreaming that the people of Missouri are on the verge of making their State free, and we shall awake to the reality instead that the Supreme Court has made Illinois a slave State. To meet and overthrow the power of that dynasty

is the work now before all those who would prevent that consummation. That is what we have to do. How can we best do it?

There are those who denounce us openly to their own  
5 friends, and yet whisper us softly that Senator Douglas  
is the aptest instrument there is with which to effect that  
object. They wish us to infer all from the fact that he now  
has a little quarrel with the present head of the dynasty;  
and that he has regularly voted with us on a single point  
10 upon which he and we have never differed. They remind  
us that he is a great man, and that the largest of us are  
very small ones. Let this be granted. But "a living dog  
is better than a dead lion." Judge Douglas, if not a dead  
lion for this work, is at least a caged and toothless one.  
15 How can he oppose the advances of slavery? He don't  
care anything about it. His avowed mission is impressing  
the "public heart" to care nothing about it. A leading  
Douglas Democratic newspaper thinks Douglas's superior  
talent will be needed to resist the revival of the African  
20 slave trade. Does Douglas believe an effort to revive that  
trade is approaching? He has not said so. Does he really  
think so? But if it is, how can he resist it? For years he  
has labored to prove it a sacred right of white men to take  
negro slaves into the new Territories. Can he possibly  
25 show that it is less a sacred right to buy them where they  
can be bought cheapest? And unquestionably they can  
be bought cheaper in Africa than in Virginia. He has done  
all in his power to reduce the whole question of slavery to  
one of a mere right of property; and as such, how can he  
30 oppose the foreign slave trade? How can he refuse that  
trade in that "property" shall be "perfectly free," unless  
he does it as a protection to the home production? And as  
the home producers will probably not ask the protection,  
he will be wholly without a ground of opposition.

Senator Douglas holds, we know, that a man may rightfully be wiser to-day than he was yesterday—that he may rightfully change when he finds himself wrong. But can we, for that reason, run ahead, and infer that he will make any particular change, of which he himself has given no intimation? Can we safely base our action upon any such vague inference? Now, as ever, I wish not to misrepresent Judge Douglas's position, question his motives, or do aught than can be personally offensive to him. Whenever, if ever, he and we can come together on principle so that our great cause may have assistance from his great ability, I hope to have interposed no adventitious obstacle. But clearly, he is not now with us—he does not pretend to be—he does not promise ever to be.

Our cause, then, must be intrusted to, and conducted by, its own undoubted friends—those whose hands are free, whose hearts are in the work, who do care for the result. Two years ago the Republicans of the nation mustered over thirteen hundred thousand strong. We did this under the single impulse of resistance to a common danger, with every external circumstance against us. Of strange, discordant, and even hostile elements, we gathered from the four winds, and formed and fought the battle through, and under the constant hot fire of a disciplined, proud, and pampered enemy. Did we brave all then to falter now?—now, when that same enemy is wavering, dissevered, and belligerent? The result is not doubtful. We shall not fail—if we stand firm, we shall not fail. Wise counsels may accelerate or mistakes delay it, but, sooner or later, the victory is sure to come.

FROM THE REPLY TO DOUGLAS IN THE  
LAST JOINT DEBATE, ALTON, ILLINOIS,  
OCTOBER 15, 1858

I HAVE stated upon former occasions, and I may as well state again, what I understand to be the real issue of this controversy between Judge Douglas and myself. On the point of my wanting to make war between the free and the  
5 slave States, there has been no issue between us. So, too, when he assumes that I am in favor of introducing a perfect social and political equality between the white and black races. These are false issues, upon which Judge Douglas has tried to force the controversy. There is no  
10 foundation in truth for the charge that I maintain either of these propositions. The real issue in this controversy—the one pressing upon every mind—is the sentiment on the part of one class that looks upon the institution of slavery as a wrong, and of another class that does not look  
15 upon it as a wrong. The sentiment that contemplates the institution of slavery in this country as a wrong is the sentiment of the Republican party. It is the sentiment around which all their actions, all their arguments, circle; from which all their propositions radiate. They look upon  
20 it as being a moral, social, and political wrong; and while they contemplate it as such, they nevertheless have due regard for its actual existence among us, and the difficulties of getting rid of it in any satisfactory way, and to all the constitutional obligations thrown about it. Yet  
25 having a due regard for these, they desire a policy in regard to it that looks to its not creating any more danger. They insist that it, as far as may be, be treated as a wrong, and

one of the methods of treating it as a wrong is to make provision that it shall grow no larger. They also desire a policy that looks to a peaceful end of slavery sometime as being a wrong. These are the views they entertain in regard to it, as I understand them; and all their sentiments, all their arguments and propositions, are brought within this range. I have said, and I repeat it here, that if there be a man amongst us who does not think that the institution of slavery is wrong in any one of the aspects of which I have spoken, he is misplaced, and ought not to be with us. And if there be a man amongst us who is so impatient of it as a wrong as to disregard its actual presence among us and the difficulty of getting rid of it suddenly in a satisfactory way, and to disregard the constitutional obligations thrown about it, that man is misplaced if he is on our platform. We disclaim sympathy with him in practical action. He is not placed properly with us.

On this subject of treating it as a wrong, and limiting its spread, let me say a word. Has anything ever threatened the existence of this Union save and except this very institution of slavery? What is it that we hold most dear amongst us? Our own liberty and prosperity. What has ever threatened our liberty and prosperity save and except this institution of slavery? if this is true, how do you propose to improve the condition of things by enlarging slavery—by spreading it out and making it bigger? You may have a wen or cancer upon your person, and not be able to cut it out lest you bleed to death; but surely it is no way to cure it to engraft it and spread it over your whole body. That is no proper way of treating what you regard as a wrong. You see this peaceful way of dealing with it as a wrong—restricting the spread of it, and not allowing it to go into new countries where it has not already existed. That is the peaceful way, the old-fashioned

way, the way in which the fathers themselves set us the example.

On the other hand, I have said there is a sentiment which treats it as not being wrong. That is the Democratic sentiment of this day. I do not mean to say that every man who stands within that range positively asserts that it is right. That class will include all who positively assert that it is right, and all who, like Judge Douglas, treat it as indifferent, and do not say it is either right or wrong.

10 These two classes of men fall within the general class of those who do not look upon it as a wrong. And if there be among you anybody who supposes that he, as a Democrat, can consider himself "as much opposed to slavery as anybody," I would like to reason with him. You never

15 treat it as a wrong. What other thing that you consider as a wrong, do you deal with as you deal with that? Perhaps you say it is wrong, but your leader never does, and you quarrel with anybody who says it is wrong. Although you pretend to say so yourself, you can find no fit place to

20 deal with it as a wrong. You must not say anything about it in the free States, because it is not here. You must not say anything about it in the slave States, because it is there. You must not say anything about it in the pulpit, because that is religion, and has nothing to do with it.

25 You must not say anything about it in politics, because that will disturb the security of "my place." There is no place to talk about it as being a wrong, although you say yourself it is a wrong. But finally you will screw yourself up to the belief that if the people of the slave States should

30 adopt a system of gradual emancipation on the slavery question, you would be in favor of it. You would be in favor of it! You say that is getting it in the right place, and you would be glad to see it succeed. But you are deceiving yourself. You all know that Frank Blair and



Gratz Brown, down there in St. Louis, undertook to introduce that system in Missouri. They fought as valiantly as they could for the system of gradual emancipation which you pretend you would be glad to see succeed. Now I will bring you to the test. After a hard fight, they were 5 beaten; and when the news came over here, you threw up your hats and hurrahed for Democracy. More than that, take all the argument made in favor of the system you have proposed, and it carefully excludes the idea that there is anything wrong in the institution of slavery. The argu- 10 ments to sustain that policy carefully exclude it. Even here to-day you heard Judge Douglas quarrel with me because I uttered a wish that it might sometime come to an end. Although Henry Clay could say he wished every 15 slave in the United States was in the country of his ancestors, I am denounced by those pretending to respect Henry Clay for uttering a wish that it might sometime, in some peaceful way, come to an end.

The Democratic policy in regard to that institution will not tolerate the merest breath, the slightest hint, of the 20 least degree of wrong about it. Try it by some of Judge Douglas's arguments. He says he "don't care whether it is voted up or voted down" in the Territories. I do not care myself, in dealing with that expression, whether it is intended to be expressive of his individual sentiments on 25 the subject, or only of the national policy he desires to have established. It is alike valuable for my purpose. Any man can say that who does not see anything wrong in slavery, but no man can logically say it who does see a wrong in it; because no man can logically say he don't 30 care whether a wrong is voted up or voted down. He may say he don't care whether an indifferent thing is voted up or voted down, but he must logically have a choice between a right thing and a wrong thing. He contends

that whatever community wants slaves has a right to have them. So they have if it is not a wrong. But if it is a wrong, he cannot say people have a right to do wrong. He says that, upon the score of equality, slaves should be allowed to go into a new Territory like other property. This is strictly logical if there is no difference between it and other property. If it and other property are equal, his argument is entirely logical. But if you insist that one is wrong and the other right, there is no use to institute a comparison between right and wrong. You may turn over everything in the Democratic policy from beginning to end, whether in the shape it takes on the statute-book, in the shape it takes in the Dred Scott decision, in the shape it takes in conversation, or the shape it takes in short maxim-like arguments—it everywhere carefully excludes the idea that there is anything wrong in it.

That is the real issue. That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world. They are the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time; and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity, and the other the divine right of kings. It is the same principle in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same spirit that says, “You toil and work and earn bread, and I’ll eat it.” No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle.

I was glad to express my gratitude at Quincy, and I reëxpress it here to Judge Douglas—that he looks to no end of the institution of slavery. That will help the people to

see where the struggle really is. It will hereafter place with us all men who really do wish the wrong may have an end. And whenever we can get rid of the fog which obscures the real question,—when we can get Judge Douglas and his friends to avow a policy looking to its perpetuation,—we can get out from among them that class of men and bring them to the side of those who treat it as a wrong. Then there will soon be an end of it, and that end will be its “ultimate extinction.” Whenever the issue can be distinctly made, and all extraneous matter thrown out, so that men can fairly see the real difference between the parties, this controversy will soon be settled, and it will be done peaceably too. There will be no war, no violence. It will be placed again where the wisest and best men of the world placed it. Brooks of South Carolina once declared that when this Constitution was framed, its framers did not look to the institution existing until this day. When he said this, I think he stated a fact that is fully borne out by the history of the times. But he also said they were better and wiser men than the men of these days; yet the men of these days had experience which they had not, and by the invention of the cotton-gin it became a necessity in this country that slavery should be perpetual. I now say that, willingly or unwillingly, purposely or without purpose, Judge Douglas has been the most prominent instrument in changing the position of the institution to slavery,—which the fathers of the government expected to come to an end ere this,—and putting it upon Brooks’s cotton-gin basis—placing it where he openly confesses he has no desire there shall ever be an end of it.

ADDRESS AT COOPER UNION, NEW YORK,  
FEBRUARY 27, 1860

MR. PRESIDENT AND FELLOW-CITIZENS OF NEW YORK:  
The facts with which I shall deal this evening are mainly  
old and familiar; nor is there anything new in the general  
use I shall make of them. If there shall be any novelty,  
5 it will be in the mode of presenting the facts, and the in-  
ferences and observations following that presentation. In  
his speech last autumn at Columbus, Ohio, as reported in  
the *New York Times*, Senator Douglas said:

10 "Our fathers, when they framed the government under which we  
live, understood this question just as well, and even better, than we  
do now."

I fully indorse this, and I adopt it as a text for this dis-  
course. I so adopt it because it furnishes a precise and  
an agreed starting-point for a discussion between Repub-  
15 licans and the wing of the Democracy headed by Senator  
Douglas. It simply leaves the inquiry: What was the  
understanding those fathers had of the question men-  
tioned?

What is the frame of government under which we live?  
20 The answer must be, "The Constitution of the United  
States." That Constitution consists of the original, framed  
in 1787, and under which the present government first  
went into operation, and twelve subsequently framed  
amendments, the first ten of which were framed in 1789.

25 Who were our fathers that framed the Constitution? I  
suppose the "thirty-nine" who signed the original instru-  
ment may be fairly called our fathers who framed that part  
of the present government. It is almost exactly true to

say they framed it, and it is altogether true to say they fairly represented the opinion and sentiment of the whole nation at that time. Their names, being familiar to nearly all, and accessible to quite all, need not now be repeated.

I take these "thirty-nine," for the present, as being 5  
"our fathers who framed the government under which we live." What is the question, which, according to the text, those fathers understood "just as well, and even better, than we do now?"

It is this: Does the proper division of local from Federal 10  
authority or anything in the Constitution, forbid our Federal Government to control as to slavery in our Federal Territories?

Upon this, Senator Douglas holds the affirmative, and Republicans the negative. This affirmation and denial 15  
form an issue; and this issue—this question—is precisely what the text declares our fathers understood "better than we." Let us now inquire whether the "thirty-nine," or any of them, ever acted upon this question; and if they did, how they acted upon it—how they expressed that 20  
better understanding. In 1784, three years before the Constitution, the United States then owning the Northwestern Territory, and no other, the Congress of the Confederation had before them the question of prohibiting slavery in that Territory; and four of the "thirty-nine" who afterward 25  
framed the Constitution were in that Congress, and voted on that question. Of these, Roger Sherman, Thomas Mifflin, and Hugh Williamson voted for the prohibition, thus showing that, in their understanding, no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor anything else, properly 30  
forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory. The other of the four, James McHenry, voted against the prohibition, showing that for some cause he thought it improper to vote for it.

In 1787, still before the Constitution, but while the convention was in session framing it, and while the Northwestern Territory still was the only Territory owned by the United States, the same question of prohibiting slavery in the Territory again came before the Congress of the Confederation; and two more of the "thirty-nine" who afterward signed the Constitution were in that Congress, and voted on the question. They were William Blount and William Few; and they both voted for the prohibition—thus showing that in their understanding no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor anything else, properly forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory. This time the prohibition became a law, being part of what is now well known as the Ordinance of '87.

The question of Federal control of slavery in the Territories seems not to have been directly before the convention which framed the original Constitution; and hence it is not recorded that the "thirty-nine," or any of them, while engaged on that instrument, expressed any opinion on that precise question.

In 1789, by the first Congress which sat under the Constitution, an Act was passed to enforce the Ordinance of '87, including the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory. The bill for this Act was reported by one of the "thirty-nine"—Thomas Fitzsimmons, then a member of the House of Representatives from Pennsylvania. It went through all its stages without ayes and nays, which is equivalent to a unanimous passage. In this Congress there were sixteen of the thirty-nine fathers who framed the original Constitution. They were John Langdon, Nicholas Gilman, Wm. S. Johnson, Roger Sherman, Robert Morris, Thomas Fitzsimmons, William Few, Abraham Baldwin, Rufus King, William Paterson, George



Clymer, Richard Bassett, George Read, Pierce Butler, Daniel Carroll, and James Madison.

This shows that, in their understanding, no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor anything in the Constitution, properly forbade Congress to prohibit slavery in the Federal territory; else both their fidelity to correct principle, and their oath to support the Constitution, would have constrained them to oppose the prohibition. 5

Again, George Washington, another of the "thirty-nine," was then President of the United States, and as such approved and signed the bill, thus completing its validity as a law, and thus showing that, in his understanding, no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor anything in the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory. 15

No great while after the adoption of the original Constitution, North Carolina ceded to the Federal Government the country now constituting the State of Tennessee; and a few years later, Georgia ceded that which now constitutes the States of Mississippi and Alabama. In both deeds of cession it was made a condition by the ceding States that the Federal Government should not prohibit slavery in the ceded country. Besides this, slavery was then actually in the ceded country. Under these circumstances, Congress, on taking charge of these countries, did not absolutely prohibit slavery within them. But they did interfere with it—take control of it—even there, to a certain extent. In 1798 Congress organized the Territory of Mississippi. In the Act of organization they prohibited the bringing of slaves into the Territory from any place without the United States by fine and giving freedom to slaves so brought. This Act passed both branches of Congress without yeas and nays. In that Congress were three of the "thirty-nine" who framed the original Constitution. 30



They were John Langdon, George Read, and Abraham Baldwin. They all probably voted for it. Certainly they would have placed their opposition to it upon record if, in their understanding, any line dividing local from Federal authority or anything in the Constitution, properly forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory.

In 1803 the Federal Government purchased the Louisiana country. Our former territorial acquisitions came from certain of our own States; but this Louisiana country was acquired from a foreign nation. In 1804 Congress gave a territorial organization to that part of it which now constitutes the State of Louisiana. New Orleans, lying within that part, was an old and comparatively large city. There were other considerable towns and settlements, and slavery was extensively and thoroughly intermingled with the people. Congress did not, in that territorial Act, prohibit slavery; but they did interfere with it—take control of it—in a more marked and extensive way than they did in the case of Mississippi. The substance of the provision therein made in relation to slaves was:

1. That no slave should be imported into the Territory from foreign parts.
2. That no slave should be carried into it who had been imported into the United States since the first day of May, 1798.
3. That no slave should be carried into it, except by the owner, and for his own use as a settler; the penalty in all cases being a fine upon the violator of the law, and freedom to the slave.

This Act also was passed without ayes or nays. In the Congress which passed it there were two of the “thirty-nine.” They were Abraham Baldwin and Jonathan Dayton. As stated in the case of Mississippi, it is probable

they both voted for it. They would not have allowed it to pass without recording their opposition to it if, in their understanding, it violated either the line properly dividing local from Federal authority, or any provision of the Constitution.

In 1819-20 came and passed the Missouri question. Many votes were taken, by yeas and nays, in both branches of Congress, upon the various phases of the general question. Two of the "thirty-nine"—Rufus King and Charles Pinckney—were members of that Congress. Mr. King 10 steadily voted for slavery prohibition and against all compromises, while Mr. Pinckney as steadily voted against slavery prohibition and against all compromises. By this, Mr. King showed that, in his understanding, no line dividing local from Federal authority, nor anything in the Con- 15 stitution, was violated by Congress prohibiting slavery in Federal territory; while Mr. Pinckney, by his votes, showed that, in his understanding, there was some sufficient reason for opposing such prohibition in that case.

The cases I have mentioned are the only acts of the 20 "thirty-nine," or any of them, upon the direct issue, which I have been able to discover.

To enumerate the persons who thus acted as being four in 1784, two in 1787, seventeen in 1789, three in 1798, two in 1804, and two in 1819-20, there would be thirty of them. 25 But this would be counting John Langdon, Roger Sherman, William Few, Rufus King, and George Read each twice, and Abraham Baldwin three times. The true number of those of the "thirty-nine" whom I have shown to have acted upon the question which, by the text, they un- 30 derstood better than we, is twenty-three, leaving sixteen not shown to have acted upon it in any way.

Here, then, we have twenty-three out of our thirty-nine fathers "who framed the government under which we live,"

who have, upon their official responsibility and their corporal oaths, acted upon the very question which the text affirms they "understood just as well, and even better, than we do now;" and twenty-one of them—a clear majority of the whole "thirty-nine"—so acting upon it as to make them guilty of gross political impropriety and wilful perjury if, in their understanding, any proper division between local and Federal authority, or anything in the Constitution they had made themselves and sworn to support, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories. Thus the twenty-one acted; and, as actions speak louder than words, so actions under such responsibility speak still louder.

Two of the twenty-three voted against congressional prohibition of slavery in the Federal territories in the instances in which they acted upon the question. But for what reasons they so voted is not known. They may have done so because they thought a proper division of local from Federal authority, or some provision or principle of the Constitution, stood in the way; or they may, without any such question, have voted against the prohibition on what appeared to them to be sufficient grounds of expediency. No one who has sworn to support the Constitution can conscientiously vote for what he understands to be an unconstitutional measure, however expedient he may think it; but one may and ought to vote against a measure which he deems constitutional if, at the same time, he deems it inexpedient. It, therefore, would be unsafe to set down even the two who voted against the prohibition as having done so because, in their understanding, any proper division of local from Federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in Federal territory.

The remaining sixteen of the "thirty-nine," so far as I

have discovered, have left no record of their understanding upon the direct question of Federal control of slavery in the Federal Territories. But there is much reason to believe that their understanding upon that question would not have appeared different from that of their twenty-three 5 compeers, had it been manifested at all.

For the purpose of adhering rigidly to the text, I have purposely omitted whatever understanding may have been manifested by any person, however distinguished, other than the thirty-nine fathers who framed the original 10 Constitution; and, for the same reason, I have also omitted whatever understanding may have been manifested by any of the "thirty-nine" even on any other phase of the general question of slavery. If we should look into their acts and declarations on those other phases, as the foreign slave- 15 trade and the morality and policy of slavery generally, it would appear to us that on the direct question of Federal control of slavery in Federal Territories, the sixteen, if they had acted at all, would probably have acted as the twenty-three did. Among that sixteen were several of the 20 most noted anti-slavery men of those times, as Dr. Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, and Gouverneur Morris, while there was not one now known to have been otherwise, unless it may be John Rutledge of South Carolina.

The sum of the whole is that of our thirty-nine fathers 25 who framed the original Constitution, twenty-one—a clear majority of the whole—certainly understood that no proper division of local from Federal authority, nor any part of the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control slavery in the Federal Territories; while all the rest 30 had probably the same understanding. Such, unquestionably, was the understanding of our fathers who framed the original Constitution; and the text affirms that they understood the question "better than we."

But, so far, I have been considering the understanding of the question manifested by the framers of the original Constitution. In and by the original instrument, a mode was provided for amending it; and, as I have already  
5 stated, the present frame of "the government under which we live" consists of that original, and twelve amendatory articles framed and adopted since. Those who now insist that Federal control of slavery in Federal Territories violates the Constitution, point us to the provisions which  
10 they suppose it thus violates; and, as I understand, they all fix upon provisions in these amendatory articles, and not in the original instrument. The Supreme Court, in the Dred Scott case, plant themselves upon the Fifth Amendment, which provides that no person shall be de-  
15 prived of "life, liberty, or property without due process of law"; while Senator Douglas and his peculiar adherents plant themselves upon the Tenth Amendment, providing that "the powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution" are reserved to the States respectively,  
20 or to the people.

Now, it so happens that these amendments were framed by the first Congress which sat under the Constitution—the identical Congress which passed the Act, already mentioned, enforcing the prohibition of slavery in the North-  
25 western Territory. Not only was it the same Congress, but they were the identical, same individual men who, at the same session, and at the same time within the session, had under consideration, and in progress toward maturity, these constitutional amendments and this Act prohibiting  
30 slavery in all the territory the nation owned. The constitutional amendments were introduced before, and passed after, the Act enforcing the Ordinance of '87, so that, during the whole pendency of the Act to enforce the Ordinance, the constitutional amendments were also pending.

The seventy-six members of that Congress, including sixteen of the framers of the original Constitution, as before stated, were preëminently our fathers who framed that part of "the government under which we live", which is now claimed as forbidding the Federal Government to control slavery in the Federal Territories. 5

Is it not a little presumptuous in any one at this day to affirm that the two things which that Congress deliberately framed and carried to maturity at the same time, are absolutely inconsistent with each other? And does not such affirmation become impudently absurd when coupled with the other affirmation, from the same mouth, that those who did the two things alleged to be inconsistent, understood whether they really were inconsistent better than we—better than he who affirms that they are inconsistent? 15

It is surely safe to assume that the thirty-nine framers of the original Constitution, and the seventy-six members of the Congress which framed the amendments thereto taken together do certainly include those who may be fairly called "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." And so assuming, I defy any man to show that any one of them ever, in his whole life, declared that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from Federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories. I go a step further. I defy any one to show that any living man in the whole world ever did, prior to the beginning of the present century (and I might almost say prior to the beginning of the last half of the present century) declare that, in his understanding, any proper division of local from Federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbade the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories. To those who now so declare I give not only "our 20 25 30



fathers who framed the government under which we live," but with them all other living men within the century in which it was framed, among whom to search, and they shall not be able to find the evidence of a single man agreeing with them.

Now, and here, let me guard a little against being misunderstood. I do not mean to say we are bound to follow implicitly in whatever our fathers did. To do so would be to discard all the lights of current experience—to reject all progress, all improvement. What I do say is that, if we would supplant the opinions and policy of our fathers in any case, we should do so upon evidence so conclusive and argument so clear, that even their great authority, fairly considered and weighed, cannot stand; and most surely not in a case whereof we ourselves declare they understood the question better than we.

If any man at this day sincerely believes that a proper division of local from Federal authority, or any part of the Constitution, forbids, the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories, he is right to say so, and to enforce his position by all truthful evidence and fair argument which he can. But he has no right to mislead others, who have less access to history and less leisure to study it, into the false belief that "our fathers who framed the government under which we live" were of the same opinion—thus substituting falsehood and deception for truthful evidence and fair argument. If any man at this day sincerely believes "our fathers who framed the government under which we live" used and applied principles in other cases which ought to have led them to understand that a proper division of local from Federal authority, or some part of the Constitution, forbids the Federal Government to control as to slavery in the Federal Territories, he is right to say so. But he



should, at the same time, brave the responsibility of declaring that, in his opinion, he understands their principles better than they did themselves and especially should he not shirk that responsibility by asserting that they "understood the question just as well, and even better, than we do now." 5

But enough! Let all who believe that "our fathers who framed the government under which we live understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now," speak as they spoke, and act as they acted upon it. 10 This is all Republicans ask—all Republicans desire—in relation to slavery. As those fathers marked it, so let it be again marked, as an evil not to be extended, but to be tolerated and protected only because of and so far as its actual presence among us makes that toleration and protection a necessity. Let all the guaranties those fathers 15 gave it be not grudgingly, but fully and fairly, maintained. For this Republicans contend, and with this, so far as I know or believe, they will be content. 20

And now, if they would listen—as I suppose they will not,—I would address a few words to the Southern people. 20

I would say to them: You consider yourselves a reasonable and a just people; and I consider that in the general qualities of reason and justice you are not inferior to any other people. Still, when you speak of us Republicans, 25 you do so only to denounce us as reptiles, or, at the best, as no better than outlaws. You will grant a hearing to pirates or murderers, but nothing like it to "Black Republicans." In all your contentions with one another, each of you deems an unconditional condemnation of 30 "Black Republicanism" as the first thing to be attended to. Indeed, such condemnation of us seems to be an indispensable prerequisite—license, so to speak—among you to be admitted or permitted to speak at all. Now, can you

or not be prevailed upon to pause and to consider whether this is quite just to us, or even to yourselves? Bring forward your charges and specifications, and then be patient long enough to hear us deny or justify.

- 5 You say we are sectional. We deny it. That makes an issue; and the burden of proof is upon you. You produce your proof; and what is it? Why, that our party has no existence in your section—gets no votes in your section. The fact is substantially true; but does it prove the issue?
- 10 If it does, then in case we should, without change of principle, begin to get votes in your section, we should thereby cease to be sectional. You cannot escape this conclusion; and yet are you willing to abide by it? If you are, you will probably soon find that we have ceased to be sectional,
- 15 for we shall get votes in your section this very year. You will then begin to discover, as the truth plainly is, that your proof does not touch the issue. The fact that we get no votes in your section is a fact of your making, and not of ours. And if there be fault in that fact, that fault is
- 20 primarily yours, and remains so until you show that we repel you by some wrong principle or practice. If we do repel you by any wrong principle or practice, the fault is ours; but this brings you to where you ought to have started—to a discussion of the right or wrong of our prin-
- 25 ciple. If our principle, put in practice, would wrong your section for the benefit of ours, or for any other object, then our principle, and we with it, are sectional, and are justly opposed and denounced as such. Meet us, then, on the question of whether our principle, put in practice,
- 30 would wrong your section; and so meet us as if it were possible that something may be said on our side. Do you accept the challenge? No! Then you really believe that the principle which “our fathers who framed the government under which we live” thought so clearly right as to

adopt it, and indorse it again and again upon their official oaths, is in fact so clearly wrong as to demand your condemnation without a moment's consideration.

Some of you delight to flaunt in our faces the warning against sectional parties given by Washington in his *Farewell Address*. Less than eight years before Washington gave that warning, he had, as President of the United States, approved and signed an Act of Congress enforcing the prohibition of slavery in the Northwestern Territory, which Act embodied the policy of the Government upon that subject up to and at the very moment he penned that warning; and about one year after he penned it, he wrote Lafayette that he considered that prohibition a wise measure, expressing in the same connection his hope that we should at some time have a confederacy of free States.

Bearing this in mind, and seeing that sectionalism has since arisen upon this same subject, is that warning a weapon in your hands against us, or in our hands against you? Could Washington himself speak, would he cast the blame of that sectionalism upon us, who sustain his policy, or upon you, who repudiate it. We respect that warning of Washington, and we commend it to you, together with his example pointing to the right application of it.

But you say you are conservative—eminently conservative—while we are revolutionary, destructive, or something of the sort. What is conservatism? Is it not adherence to the old and tried against the new and untried? We stick to, contend for, the identical old policy on the point in controversy which was adopted by "our fathers who framed the government under which we live"; while you with one accord reject and scout and spit upon that old policy, and insist upon substituting something new. True, you disagree among yourselves as to what that substitute shall be. You are divided on new proposi-

tions and plans, but you are unanimous in rejecting and denouncing the old policy of the fathers. Some of you are for reviving the foreign slave-trade; some for a congressional slave code for the Territories; some for Congress  
5 forbidding the Territories to prohibit slavery within their limits; some for maintaining slavery in the Territories through the judiciary; some for the "gur-reat pur-rinciple" that "if one man would enslave another, no third man should object," fantastically called "popular sovereignty";  
10 but never a man among you is in favor of Federal prohibition of slavery in Federal Territories, according to the practice of "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." Not one of all your various plans can show a precedent or an advocate in the century within  
15 which our government originated. Consider, then, whether your claim of conservatism for yourselves, and your charge of destructiveness against us, are based on the most clear and stable foundations.

Again, you say we have made the slavery question more  
20 prominent than it formerly was. We deny it. We admit that it is more prominent, but we deny that we made it so. It was not we, but you, who discarded the old policy of the fathers. We resisted, and still resist, your innovation; and thence comes the greater prominence of the question.  
25 Would you have that question reduced to its former proportions? Go back to that old policy. What has been will be again, under the same conditions. If you would have the peace of the old times, re-adopt the precepts and policy of the old times.

30 You charge that we stir up insurrections among your slaves. We deny it; and what is your proof? Harper's Ferry! John Brown! John Brown was no Republican; and you have failed to implicate a single Republican in his Harper's Ferry enterprise. If any member of our party

is guilty in that matter, you know it, or you do not know it. If you do know it, you are inexcusable for not designating the man and proving the fact. If you do not know it, you are inexcusable for asserting it, and especially for persisting in the assertion after you have tried and failed 5 to make the proof. You need not be told that persisting in a charge which one does not know to be true, is simply malicious slander.

Some of you admit that no Republican designedly aided or encouraged the Harper's Ferry affair, but still insist 10 that our doctrines and declarations necessarily lead to such results. We do not believe it. We know we hold no doctrine and make no declaration which were not held to and made by "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." You never dealt fairly by us in relation 15 to this affair. When it occurred, some important State elections were near at hand, and you were in evident glee with the belief that, by charging the blame upon us, you could get an advantage of us in those elections. The elections came, and your expectations were not quite fulfilled. 20 Every Republican man knew that, as to himself at least, your charge was a slander, and he was not much inclined by it to cast his vote in your favor. Republican doctrines and declarations are accompanied with a continual protest against any interference whatever with your slaves, or 25 with you about your slaves. Surely this does not encourage them to revolt. True, we do, in common with "our fathers who framed the government under which we live," declare our belief that slavery is wrong; but the slaves do not hear us declare even this. For anything we say or do, 30 the slaves would scarcely know there is a Republican party. I believe they would not, in fact, generally know it but for your misrepresentations of us in their hearing. In your political contests among yourselves, each faction charges

the other with sympathy with Black Republicanism; and then, to give point to the charge, defines Black Republicanism to simply be insurrection, blood, and thunder among the slaves.

- 5 Slave insurrections are no more common now than they were before the Republican party was organized. What induced the Southampton insurrection twenty-eight years ago, in which at least three times as many lives were lost as at Harper's Ferry? You can scarcely stretch your very  
10 elastic fancy to the conclusion that Southampton was "got up by Black Republicanism." In the present state of things in the United States, I do not think a general, or even a very extensive, slave insurrection is possible. The indispensable concert of action cannot be attained.
- 15 The slaves have no means of rapid communication; nor can incendiary freemen, black or white, supply it. The explosive materials are everywhere in parcels, but there neither are, nor can be supplied, the indispensable connecting trains.
- 20 Much is said by Southern people about the affection of slaves for their masters and mistresses; and a part of it, at least, is true. A plot for an uprising could scarcely be devised and communicated to twenty individuals before some one of them, to save the life of a favorite master or  
25 mistress, would divulge it. This is the rule; and the slave revolution in Hayti was not an exception to it, but a case occurring under peculiar circumstances. The Gunpowder Plot of British history, though not connected with slaves, was more in point. In that case only about twenty were  
30 admitted to the secret; and yet one of them, in his anxiety to save a friend, betrayed the plot to that friend, and by consequence, averted the calamity. Occasional poisonings from the kitchen and open or stealthy assassinations in the field, and local revolts extending to a score or so, will



continue to occur as the natural results of slavery; but no general insurrection of slaves, as I think, can happen in this country for a long time. Whoever much fears or much hopes for such an event, will be alike disappointed.

In the language of Mr. Jefferson, uttered many years ago: "It is still in our power to direct the process of emancipation and deportation peaceably and in such slow degrees as that the evil will wear insensibly; and their places be *pari passu*, filled up by free white laborers. If, on the contrary, it is left to force itself on, human nature must shudder at the prospect held up."

Mr. Jefferson did not mean to say, nor do I, that the power of emancipation is in the Federal Government. He spoke of Virginia; and, as to the power of emancipation, I speak of the slave-holding States only. The Federal Government, however, as we insist, has the power of restraining the extension of the institution—the power to insure that a slave insurrection shall never occur on any American soil which is now free from slavery.

John Brown's effort was peculiar. It was not a slave insurrection. It was an attempt by white men to get up a revolt among slaves, in which the slaves refused to participate. In fact it was so absurd that the slaves, with all their ignorance, saw plainly enough it could not succeed. That affair, in its philosophy, corresponds with the many attempts, related in history, at the assassination of kings and emperors. An enthusiast broods over the oppression of a people till he fancies himself commissioned by Heaven to liberate them. He ventures the attempt, which ends in little else than his own execution. Orsini's attempt on Louis Napoleon and John Brown's attempt at Harper's Ferry were, in their philosophy, precisely the same. The eagerness to cast blame on old England in the one case

and on New England in the other, does not disprove the sameness of the two things.

And how much would it avail you, if you could, by the use of John Brown, Helper's book, and the like, break up  
5 the Republican organization? Human action can be modified to some extent, but human nature cannot be changed. There is a judgment and a feeling against slavery in this nation which cast at least a million and a half of votes. You cannot destroy that judgment and feeling—that senti-  
10 ment—by breaking up the political organization which rallies around it. You can scarcely scatter and disperse an army which has been formed into order in the face of your heaviest fire; but if you could, how much would you gain by forcing the sentiment which created it out of the  
15 peaceful channel of the ballot-box into some other channel? What would that other channel probably be? Would the number of John Browns be lessened or enlarged by the operation?

But you will break up the Union rather than submit to  
20 a denial of your constitutional rights.

That has a somewhat reckless sound; but it would be palliated, if not fully justified, were we proposing, by the mere force of numbers, to deprive you of some right plainly written down in the Constitution. But we are proposing  
25 no such thing.

When you make these declarations, you have a specific and well-understood allusion to an assumed constitutional right of yours to take slaves into the Federal Territories, and to hold them there as property. But no such right is  
30 specifically written in the Constitution. That instrument is literally silent about any such right. We, on the contrary, deny that such a right has any existence in the Constitution, even by implication.

Your purpose, then, plainly stated, is that you will

destroy the government, unless you be allowed to construe and force the Constitution as you please on all points in dispute between you and us. You will rule or ruin in all events.

This, plainly stated, is your language. Perhaps you will say the Supreme Court has decided the disputed constitutional question in your favor. Not quite so. But waiving the lawyer's distinction between dictum and decision, the court has decided the question for you in a sort of way. The court has substantially said, it is your constitutional right to take slaves into the Federal Territories, and to hold them there as property. When I say the decision was made in a sort of way, I mean it was made in a divided court, by a bare majority of the judges, and they not quite agreeing with one another in the reasons for making it; that it is so made as that its avowed supporters disagree with one another about its meaning, and that it was mainly based upon a mistaken statement of fact—the statement in the opinion that “the right of property in a slave is distinctly and expressly affirmed in the Constitution.”

An inspection of the Constitution will show that the right of property in a slave is not “distinctly and expressly affirmed” in it. Bear in mind, the judges do not pledge their judicial opinion that such right is impliedly affirmed in the Constitution; but they pledge their veracity that it is “distinctly and expressly” affirmed there—“distinctly,” that is, not mingled with anything else—“expressly,” that is, in words meaning just that, without the aid of any inference, and susceptible of no other meaning.

If they had only pledged their judicial opinion that such right is affirmed in the instrument by implication, it would be open to others to show that neither the word “slave” nor “slavery” is to be found in the Constitution, nor the word “property” even, in any connection with language

alluding to the things slave, or slavery; and that wherever in that instrument the slave is alluded to, he is called a "person"; and wherever his master's legal right in relation to him is alluded to, it is spoken of as "service or labor which may be due"—as a debt payable in service or labor. Also it would be open to show by contemporaneous history, that this mode of alluding to slaves and slavery, instead of speaking of them, was employed on purpose to exclude from the Constitution the idea that there could be property in man.

To show all this is easy and certain.

When this obvious mistake of the judges shall be brought to their notice, is it not reasonable to expect that they will withdraw the mistaken statement and reconsider the conclusion based upon it?

And then it is to be remembered that "our fathers who framed the government under which we live"—the men who made the Constitution—decided this same constitutional question in our favor long ago; decided it without division among themselves when making the decision; without division among themselves about the meaning of it after it was made, and, so far as any evidence is left, without basing it upon any mistaken statement of facts.

Under all these circumstances, do you really feel yourselves justified to break up this government unless such a court decision as yours is shall be at once submitted to as a conclusive and final rule of political action? But you will not abide the election of a Republican president! In that supposed event, you say, you will destroy the Union; and then, you say, the great crime of having destroyed it will be upon us! That is cool. A highwayman holds a pistol to my ear and mutters through his teeth, "Stand and deliver, or I shall kill you, and then you will be a murderer!"

To be sure, what the robber demanded of me—my money—was my own; and I had a clear right to keep it; but it was no more my own than my vote is my own; and the threat of death to me, to extort my money, and the threat of destruction to the Union, to extort my vote, can scarcely be distinguished in principle. 5

A few words now to Republicans. It is exceedingly desirable that all parts of this great Confederacy shall be at peace and in harmony one with another. Let us Republicans do our part to have it so. Even though much provoked, let us do nothing through passion and ill temper. 10 Even though the Southern people will not so much as listen to us, let us calmly consider their demands and yield to them if, in our deliberate view of our duty, we possibly can. Judging by all they say and do, and by the subject 15 and the nature of their controversy with us, let us determine, if we can, what will satisfy them.

Will they be satisfied if the Territories be unconditionally surrendered to them? We know they will not. In all their present complaints against us, the Territories are scarcely mentioned. Invasions and insurrections are the 20 rage now. Will it satisfy them if, in the future, we have nothing to do with invasions and insurrections? We know it will not. We so know because we know we never had anything to do with invasions and insurrections; and yet 25 this total abstaining does not exempt us from the charge and the denunciation.

The question recurs, What will satisfy them? Simply this: we must not only let them alone, but we must somehow convince them that we do let them alone. This we 30 know by experience is no easy task. We have been so trying to convince them from the very beginning of our organization, but with no success. In all our platforms and speeches we have constantly protested our purpose to let

them alone, but this has had no tendency to convince them. Alike unavailing to convince them is the fact that they have never detected a man of us in any attempt to disturb them.

- 5 These natural and apparently adequate means all failing, what will convince them? This, and this only; cease to call slavery wrong, and join them in calling it right. And this must be done thoroughly—done in acts as well as in words. Silence will not be tolerated—we must place  
10 ourselves avowedly with them. Senator Douglas's new sedition law must be enacted and enforced, suppressing all declarations that slavery is wrong, whether made in politics, in presses, in pulpits, or in private. We must arrest and return their fugitive slaves with greedy pleasure.  
15 We must pull down our Free-state constitutions. The whole atmosphere must be disinfected from all taint of opposition to slavery before they will cease to believe that all their troubles proceed from us.

- I am quite aware they do not state their case precisely  
20 in this way. Most of them would probably say to us: "Let us alone; do nothing to us, and say what you please about slavery." But we do let them alone,—have never disturbed them,—so that, after all, it is what we say which dissatisfies them. They will continue to accuse us of  
25 doing until we cease saying.

- I am also aware they have not as yet in terms demanded the overthrow of our Free-state constitutions. Yet those constitutions declare the wrong of slavery with more solemn emphasis than do all other sayings against it; and  
30 when all these other sayings shall have been silenced, the overthrow of these constitutions will be demanded, and nothing be left to resist the demand. It is nothing to the contrary that they do not demand the whole of this just now. Demanding what they do, and for the reason they



do, they can voluntarily stop nowhere short of this consummation. Holding, as they do, that slavery is morally right and socially elevating, they cannot cease to demand a full national recognition of it as a legal right and a social blessing.

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Nor can we justifiably withhold this on any ground save our conviction that slavery is wrong. If slavery is right, all words, acts, laws, and constitutions against it are themselves wrong, and should be silenced and swept away. If it is right, we cannot justly object to its nationality—its universality; if it is wrong, they cannot justly insist upon its extension—its enlargement. All they ask we could readily grant, if we thought slavery right; all we ask they could as readily grant, if they thought it wrong. Their thinking it right and our thinking it wrong is the precise fact upon which depends the whole controversy. Thinking it right, as they do, they are not to blame for desiring its full recognition as being right; but thinking it wrong, as we do, can we yield to them? Can we cast our votes with their views and against our own? In view of our moral, social, and political responsibilities, can we do this?

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Wrong as we think slavery is, we can yet afford to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity arising from its actual presence in the nation; but can we, while our votes will prevent it, allow it to spread into the national Territories, and to overrun us here in these free States? If our sense of duty forbids this, then let us stand by our duty fearlessly and effectively. Let us be diverted by none of those sophistical contrivances wherewith we are so industriously plied and belabored—contrivances such as groping for some middle ground between the right and the wrong: vain as the search for a man who should be neither a living nor a dead man; such as a policy of “don’t care” on a question about which all true men

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do care; such as Union appeals beseeching true Union men to yield to Disunionists, reversing the divine rule, and calling, not the sinners, but the righteous, to repentance; such as invocations to Washington, imploring men to un-  
5 say what Washington said and undo what Washington did.

Neither let us be slandered from our duty by false accusations against us, nor frightened from it by menaces of destruction to the government, nor of dungeons to ourselves. Let us have faith that right makes might, and in  
10 that faith let us to the end dare to do our duty as we understand it.

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## LINCOLN'S FAREWELL ADDRESS AT SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

FEBRUARY 11, 1861

MY FRIENDS: No one, not in my situation, can appreciate my feeling of sadness at this parting. To this place, and the kindness of these people, I owe everything. Here I have lived a quarter of a century, and have passed from a young to an old man. Here my children have been born, 5 and one is buried. I now leave, not knowing when or whether ever I may return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that Divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. 10 Trusting in Him who can go with me, and remain with you, and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will yet be well. To His care commending you, as I hope in your prayers you will commend me, I bid you an affectionate farewell. 15

# ADDRESSES DELIVERED ON THE JOURNEY TO WASHINGTON, D. C.

FEBRUARY 11 TO 27, 1861

*Reply to an Address of Welcome at Indianapolis, Indiana,  
February 11, 1861*

GOVERNOR MORTON AND FELLOW-CITIZENS OF THE  
STATE OF INDIANA: Most heartily do I thank you for this  
magnificent reception; and while I cannot take to myself  
any share of the compliment thus paid, more than that  
5 which pertains to a mere instrument—an accidental in-  
strument perhaps I should say—of a great cause, I yet  
must look upon it as a magnificent reception, and as such  
most heartily do I thank you for it. You have been pleased  
to address yourself to me chiefly in behalf of this glorious  
10 Union in which we live, in all of which you have my hearty  
sympathy, and, as far as may be within my power, will  
have, one and inseparably, my hearty coöperation. While  
I do not expect, upon this occasion, or until I get to Wash-  
ington, to attempt any lengthy speech, I will only say that  
15 to the salvation of the Union there needs but one single  
thing, the hearts of a people like yours. When the people  
rise in mass in behalf of the Union and the liberties of this  
country, truly may it be said, "The gates of hell cannot  
prevail against them." In all trying positions in which I  
20 shall be placed, and doubtless I shall be placed in many  
such, my reliance will be upon you and the people of the  
United States; and I wish you to remember, now and for-  
ever, that it is your business, and not mine; that if the  
union of these States and the liberties of this people shall

be lost, it is but little to any one man of fifty-two years of age, but a great deal to the thirty millions of people who inhabit these United States, and to their posterity in all coming time. It is your business to rise up and preserve the Union and liberty for yourselves, and not for me. I appeal to you again to constantly bear in mind that not with politicians, not with Presidents, not with office-seekers, but with you, is the question: Shall the Union and shall the liberties of this country be preserved to the latest generations?

*Address to the Legislature of New York, at Albany, New York,  
February 18, 1861*

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK: It is with feelings of great diffidence, and, I may say, with feelings of awe, perhaps greater than I have recently experienced, that I meet you here in this place. The history of this great State, the renown of those great men who have stood here, and have spoken here, and been heard here, all crowd around my fancy, and incline me to shrink from any attempt to address you. Yet I have some confidence given me by the generous manner in which you have invited me, and by the still more generous manner in which you have received me, to speak further. You have invited and received me without distinction of party. I cannot for a moment suppose that this has been done in any considerable degree with reference to my personal services, but that it is done, in so far as I am regarded at this time, as the representative of the majesty of this great nation. I doubt not this is the truth, and the whole truth, of the case, and this is as it should be. It is more gratifying to me that this reception has been given to me as the elected representative of a free

people, than it could possibly be if tendered merely as an evidence of devotion to me, or to any one man personally.

And now I think it were more fitting that I should close these hasty remarks. It is true that, while I hold myself, without mock modesty, the humblest of all individuals that have ever been elevated to the presidency, I have a more difficult task to perform than any one of them.

10 You have generously tendered me the support—the united support—of the great Empire State. For this, in behalf of the nation—in behalf of the present and future of the nation—in behalf of civil and religious liberty for all time to come, most gratefully do I thank you. I do not  
15 propose to enter into an explanation of any particular line of policy, as to our present difficulties, to be adopted by the incoming administration. I deem it just to you, to myself, to all, that I should see everything, that I should hear everything, that I should have every light that can be  
20 brought within my reach, in order that, when I do speak, I shall have enjoyed every opportunity to take correct and true ground; and for this reason I do not propose to speak at this time of the policy of the government. But when  
25 the time comes, I shall speak, as well as I am able, for the good of the present and future of this country—for the good both of the North and of the South—for the good of the one and the other, and of all sections of the country. In the meantime, if we have patience, if we restrain ourselves, if we allow ourselves not to run off in a passion, I still have  
30 confidence that the Almighty, the Maker of the universe, will, through the instrumentality of this great and intelligent people, bring us through this as he has through all the other difficulties of our country. Relying on this, I again thank you for this generous reception.



*Address to the Senate of New Jersey, at Trenton, February 21,  
1861*

MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY: I am very grateful to you for the honorable reception of which I have been the object. I cannot but remember the place that New Jersey holds in our early history. In the Revolutionary struggle few of the States among the Old Thirteen had more of the battle-fields of the country within their limits than New Jersey. May I be pardoned if, upon this occasion, I mention that away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book, such a one as few of the younger members have ever seen—Weems's "Life of Washington." I remember all the accounts there given of the battle-fields and struggles for the liberties of the country, and none fixed themselves upon my imagination so deeply as the struggle here at Trenton, New Jersey. The crossing of the river, the contest with the Hessians, the great hardships endured at that time, all fixed themselves on my memory more than any single Revolutionary event; and you all know, for you have all been boys, how these early impressions last longer than any others. I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that these men struggled for. I am exceedingly anxious that that thing—that something even more than national independence; that something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world to all time to come—I am exceedingly anxious that this Union, the Constitution, and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which that struggle was made, and I shall be most happy indeed if I shall be a humble instrument in the hands of the Al-

mighty, and of this, his almost chosen people, for perpetuating the object of that great struggle. You give me this reception, as I understand, without distinction of party. I learn that this body is composed of a majority of gentlemen who, in the exercise of their best judgment in the choice of a chief magistrate, did not think I was the man. I understand, nevertheless, that they come forward here to greet me as the constitutionally elected President of the United States—as citizens of the United States to meet the man who, for the time being, is the representative of the majesty of the nation—united by the single purpose to perpetuate the Constitution, the Union, and the liberties of the People. As such, I accept this reception more gratefully than I could do did I believe it were tendered to me as an individual.

*Address in Independence Hall, Philadelphia, February 22, 1861*

MR. CUYLER: I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing in this place, where were collected together the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle, from which sprang the institutions under which we live. You have kindly suggested to me that in my hands is the task of restoring peace to our distracted country. I can say in return, sir, that all the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn, so far as I have been able to draw them, from the sentiments which originated in and were given to the world from this hall. I have never had a feeling, politically, that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence. I have often pondered over the dangers which were incurred by the men who assembled here and framed and adopted that Declaration. I have pondered over the toils that were

endured by the officers and soldiers of the army who achieved that independence. I have often inquired of myself what great principle or idea it was that kept this Confederacy so long together. It was not the mere matter of separation of the colonies from the motherland, but that sentiment in the Declaration of Independence which gave liberty not alone to the people of this country, but hope to all the world, for all future time. It was that which gave promise that in due time the weights would be lifted from the shoulders of all men, and that all should have an equal chance. This is the sentiment embodied in the Declaration of Independence. Now, my friends, can this country be saved on that basis? If it can I will consider myself one of the happiest men in the world if I can help to save it. If it cannot be saved upon that principle, it will be truly awful. But if this country cannot be saved without giving up that principle, I was about to say I would rather be assassinated on this spot than surrender it. Now, in my view of the present aspect of affairs, there is no need of bloodshed and war. There is no necessity for it. I am not in favor of such a course; and I may say in advance that there will be no bloodshed unless it is forced upon the government. The government will not use force, unless force is used against it.

My friends, this is wholly an unprepared speech. I did not expect to be called on to say a word when I came here. I supposed I was merely to do something toward raising a flag. I may, therefore, have said something indiscreet. (*Cries of "No, no."*) But I have said nothing but what I am willing to live by, and, if it be the pleasure of Almighty God, to die by.

## FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS

MARCH 4, 1861

FELLOW-CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES: In compliance with a custom as old as the government itself, I appear before you to address you briefly, and to take in your presence the oath prescribed by the Constitution  
5 of the United States to be taken by the President "before he enters on the execution of his office."

I do not consider it necessary at present for me to discuss the matters of administration about which there is no special anxiety or excitement.

10 Apprehension seems to exist among the people of the Southern States that by the accession of a Republican administration their property and their peace and personal security are to be endangered. There has never been any reasonable cause for such apprehension. Indeed, the most  
15 ample evidence to the contrary has all the while existed and been open to their inspection. It is found in nearly all the published speeches of him who now addresses you. I do but quote from one of those speeches when I declare that "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to inter-  
20 fere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so." Those who nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this and many similar declarations, and I have never recanted  
25 them. And, more than this, they placed in the platform for my acceptance, and as a law to themselves and to me, the clear and emphatic resolution which I now read:

"*Resolved*, That the maintenance inviolate of the rights

of the States, and especially the right of each State, to order and control its own domestic institutions according to its own judgment exclusively, is essential to that balance of power on which the perfection and endurance of our political fabric depend, and we denounce the lawless in- 5  
vasion by armed force of the soil of any State or Territory, no matter under what pretext, as among the gravest of crimes."

I now reiterate these sentiments; and, in doing so, I only press upon the public attention the most conclusive 10  
evidence of which the case is susceptible, that the property, peace, and security of no section are to be in any wise endangered by the now incoming administration. I add, too, that all the protection which, consistently with the Con-  
stitution and the laws, can be given, will be cheerfully 15  
given to all the States when lawfully demanded, for whatever cause—as cheerfully to one section as to another.

There is much controversy about the delivering up of fugitives from service or labor. The clause I now read is as plainly written in the Constitution as any other of its 20  
provisions:

"No person held to service or labor in one State, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall in consequence of any law or regulation therein be discharged from such service or labor, but shall be delivered up on claim 25  
of the party to whom such service or labor may be due."

It is scarcely questioned that this provision was intended by those who made it for the reclaiming of what we call fugitive slaves; and the intention of the lawgiver is the law. All members of Congress swear their support to the whole 30  
Constitution—to this provision as much as to any other. To the proposition, then, that slaves whose cases come within the terms of this clause "shall be delivered up," their oaths are unanimous. Now, if they would make the

effort in good temper, could they not with nearly equal unanimity frame and pass a law by means of which to keep good that unanimous oath?

There is some difference of opinion whether this clause  
5 should be enforced by national or by State authority; but surely that difference is not a very material one. If the slave is to be surrendered, it can be of but little consequence to him or to others by which authority it is done. And should any one in any case be content that his oath  
10 shall go unkept on a merely unsubstantial controversy as to how it shall be kept?

Again, in any law upon this subject, ought not all the safeguards of liberty known in civilized and humane jurisprudence to be introduced, so that a free man be not, in  
15 any case, surrendered as a slave? And might it not be well at the same time to provide by law for the enforcement of that clause in the Constitution which guarantees that "the citizens of each State shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of citizens in the several States?"

20 I take the official oath to-day with no mental reservations, and with no purpose to construe the Constitution or laws by any hypercritical rules. And while I do not choose now to specify particular acts of Congress as proper to be enforced, I do suggest that it will be much safer for all,  
25 both in official and private stations, to conform to and abide by all those acts which stand unrepealed, than to violate any of them, trusting to find impunity in having them held to be unconstitutional.

It is seventy-two years since the first inauguration of a  
30 President under our National Constitution. During that period fifteen different and greatly distinguished citizens have, in succession, administered the executive branch of the government. They have conducted it through many perils, and generally with great success. Yet, with all this



scope of precedent, I now enter upon the same task for the brief constitutional term of four years under great and peculiar difficulty. A disruption of the Federal Union, heretofore menaced, is now formidably attempted.

I hold, that in contemplation of universal law and of the Constitution, the Union of these States is perpetual. Perpetuity is implied, if not expressed, in the fundamental law of all national governments. It is safe to assert that no government proper ever had a provision in its organic law for its own termination. Continue to execute all the express provisions of our National Constitution, and the Union will endure for ever—it being impossible to destroy it except by some action not provided for in the instrument itself. 5 10

Again, if the United States be not a government proper, but an association of States in the nature of contract merely, can it, as a contract, be peaceably unmade by less than all the parties who made it? One party to a contract may violate it—break it, so to speak; but does it not require all to lawfully rescind it? 15 20

Descending from these general principles, we find the proposition that, in legal contemplation, the Union is perpetual confirmed by the history of the Union itself. The Union is much older than the Constitution. It was formed, in fact, by the Articles of Association in 1774. It was matured and continued by the Declaration of Independence in 1776. It was further matured and the faith of all the then thirteen States expressly plighted and engaged that it should be perpetual, by the Articles of Confederation in 1778. And, finally, in 1787 one of the declared objects for ordaining and establishing the Constitution was “to form a more perfect Union.” 25 30

But if the destruction of the Union by one or by a part only of the States be lawfully possible, the Union is less

perfect than before the Constitution, having lost the vital element of perpetuity.

It follows from these views that no State upon its own mere motion can lawfully get out of the Union; that resolves and ordinances to that effect are legally void; and that acts of violence, within any State or States, against the authority of the United States are insurrectionary or revolutionary, according to circumstances.

I therefore consider that, in view of the Constitution and the laws, the Union is unbroken; and to the extent of my ability I shall take care, as the Constitution itself expressly enjoins upon me, that the laws of the Union be faithfully executed in all the States. Doing this I deem to be only a simple duty on my part; and I shall perform it so far as practicable, unless my rightful masters, the American people, shall withhold the requisite means, or in some authoritative manner direct the contrary. I trust this will not be regarded as a menace, but only as the declared purpose of the Union that it will constitutionally defend and maintain itself.

In doing this there needs be no bloodshed or violence; and there shall be none, unless it is forced upon the national authority. The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government, and to collect the duties and imposts; but beyond what may be necessary for these objects, there will be no invasion, no using of force against or among the people anywhere. Where hostility to the United States, in any interior locality, shall be so great and universal as to prevent competent resident citizens from holding the Federal offices, there will be no attempt to force obnoxious strangers among the people for that object. While the strict legal right may exist in the government to enforce the exercise of these offices, the attempt to do so

would be so irritating, and so nearly impracticable withal, that I deem it better to forego for the time the uses of such offices.

The mails, unless repelled, will continue to be furnished in all parts of the Union. So far as possible, the people everywhere shall have that sense of perfect security which is most favorable to calm thought and reflection. The course here indicated will be followed unless current events and experience shall show a modification or change to be proper, and in every case and exigency my best discretion will be exercised according to circumstances actually existing, and with a view and a hope of a peaceful solution of the national troubles and the restoration of fraternal sympathies and affections.

That there are persons in one section or another who seek to destroy the Union at all events, and are glad of any pretext to do it, I will neither affirm nor deny; but if there be such, I need address no word to them. To those, however, who really love the Union may I not speak?

Before entering upon so grave a matter as the destruction of our national fabric, with all its benefits, its memories, and its hopes, would it not be wise to ascertain precisely why we do it? Will you hazard so desperate a step while there is any possibility that any portion of the ills you fly from have no real existence? Will you, while the certain ills you fly to are greater than all the real ones you fly from—will you risk the commission of so fearful a mistake?

All profess to be content in the Union if all constitutional rights can be maintained. Is it true, then, that any right, plainly written in the Constitution, has been denied? I think not. Happily the human mind is so constituted that no party can reach to the audacity of doing this. Think, if you can, of a single instance in which a plainly

- written provision of the Constitution has ever been denied. If by the mere force of numbers a majority should deprive a minority of any clearly written constitutional right, it might, in a moral point of view, justify revolution—certainly would if such a right were a vital one. But such is not our case. All the vital rights of minorities and of individuals are so plainly assured to them by affirmations and negations, guarantees and prohibitions, in the Constitution, that controversies never arise concerning them.
- 10 But no organic law can ever be framed with a provision specifically applicable to every question which may occur in practical administration. No foresight can anticipate, nor any document of reasonable length contain, express provisions for all possible questions. Shall fugitives from
- 15 labor be surrendered by national or by State authority? The Constitution does not expressly say. *May* Congress prohibit slavery in the Territories? The Constitution does not expressly say. *Must* Congress protect slavery in the Territories? The Constitution does not expressly say.
- 20 From questions of this class spring all our constitutional controversies, and we divide upon them into majorities and minorities. If the minority will not acquiesce, the majority must, or the government must cease. There is no other alternative; for continuing the government is acquiescence on one side or the other.
- 25 If a minority in such case will secede rather than acquiesce, they make a precedent which in turn will divide and ruin them; for a minority of their own will secede from them whenever a majority refuses to be controlled by such
- 30 minority. For instance, why may not any portion of a new confederacy a year or two hence arbitrarily secede again, precisely as portions of the present Union now claim to secede from it? All who cherish disunion sentiments are now being educated to the exact temper of doing this.

Is there such a perfect identity of interest among the States to compose a new Union, as to produce harmony only, and prevent renewed secession?

Plainly, the central idea of secession is the essence of anarchy. A majority held in restraint by constitutional checks and limitations, and always changing easily with deliberate changes of popular opinions and sentiments, is the only true sovereign of a free people. Whoever rejects it does, of necessity, fly to anarchy or to despotism. Unanimity is impossible; the rule of a minority, as a permanent arrangement, is wholly inadmissible; so that, rejecting the majority principle, anarchy or despotism in some form is all that is left.

I do not forget the position, assumed by some, that constitutional questions are to be decided by the Supreme Court; nor do I deny that such decisions must be binding, in any case, upon the parties to a suit, as to the object of that suit, while they are also entitled to very high respect and consideration in all parallel cases by all other departments of the government. And while it is obviously possible that such decision may be erroneous in any given case, still the evil effect following it, being limited to that particular case, with the chance that it may be overruled and never become a precedent for other cases, can better be borne than could the evils of a different practice. At the same time, the candid citizen must confess that if the policy of the government, upon vital questions affecting the whole people, is to be irrevocably fixed by decisions of the Supreme Court, the instant they are made, in ordinary litigation between parties in personal actions, the people will have ceased to be their own rulers, having to that extent practically resigned their government into the hands of that eminent tribunal. Nor is there in this view any assault upon the court or the judges. It is a duty from

which they may not shrink to decide cases properly brought before them, and it is no fault of theirs if others seek to turn their decisions to political purposes.

One section of our country believes slavery is right, and  
5 ought to be extended, while the other believes it is wrong, and ought not to be extended. This is the only substantial dispute. The fugitive-slave clause of the Constitution, and the law for the suppression of the foreign slave-trade, are each as well enforced, perhaps, as any law can ever  
10 be in a community where the moral sense of the people imperfectly supports the law itself. The great body of the people abide by the dry legal obligation in both cases, and a few break over in each. This, I think, cannot be perfectly cured; and it would be worse in both  
15 cases after the separation of the sections than before. The foreign slave-trade, now imperfectly suppressed, would be ultimately revived, without restriction, in one section, while fugitive slaves, now only partially surrendered, would not be surrendered at all by the  
20 other.

Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond  
25 the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face, and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. Is it possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation  
30 than before? Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when, after much loss on both sides, and no gain on either, you



cease fighting, the identical old questions as to terms of intercourse are again upon you.

This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their constitutional 5 right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it. I cannot be ignorant of the fact that many worthy and patriotic citizens are desirous of having the National Constitution amended. While I make no recommendation of amendments, I fully recognize 10 the rightful authority of the people over the whole subject, to be exercised in either of the modes prescribed in the instrument itself; and I should, under existing circumstances, favor rather than oppose a fair opportunity being afforded the people to act upon it. I will venture to add 15 that to me the convention mode seems preferable, in that it allows amendments to originate with the people themselves, instead of only permitting them to take or reject propositions originated by others not especially chosen for the purpose, and which might not be precisely such as 20 they would wish to either accept or refuse. I understand a proposed amendment to the Constitution—which amendment, however, I have not seen—has passed Congress, to the effect that the Federal Government shall never interfere with the domestic institutions of the States, including 25 that of persons held to service. To avoid misconstruction of what I have said, I depart from my purpose not to speak of particular amendments so far as to say that, holding such a provision to now be implied constitutional law, I have no objection to its being made express and irrevocable. 30

The chief magistrate derives all his authority from the people, and they have conferred none upon him to fix terms for the separation of the States. The people them-

selves can do this also if they choose; but the executive as such, has nothing to do with it. His duty is to administer the present government as it came to his hands, and to transmit it, unimpaired by him, to his successor.

5 Why should there not be a patient confidence in the ultimate justice of the people? Is there any better or equal hope in the world? In our present differences is either party without faith of being in the right? If the Almighty Ruler of Nations, with His eternal truth and justice, be  
10 on your side of the North, or on yours of the South, that truth and that justice will surely prevail by the judgment of this great tribunal of the American people.

By the frame of the government under which we live, this same people have wisely given their public servants  
15 but little power for mischief; and have, with equal wisdom, provided for the return of that little to their own hands at very short intervals. While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in  
20 the short space of four years.

My countrymen, one and all, think calmly and well upon this whole subject. Nothing valuable can be lost by taking time. If there be an object to hurry any of you in  
hot haste to a step which you would never take deliberately, that object will be frustrated by taking time; but  
25 no good object can be frustrated by it. Such of you as are now dissatisfied still have the old Constitution unimpaired, and, on the sensitive point, the laws of your own framing under it; while the new administration will have  
30 no immediate power, if it would, to change either. If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there is no single good reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this

avored land, are still competent to adjust in the same way all our present difficulty.

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow-countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict 5 without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect, and defend it."

I am loath to close. We are not enemies, but friends. 10 We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of 15 the Union when again touched, as they surely will be, by the better angels of our nature.

## LETTER TO WILLIAM H. SEWARD

EXECUTIVE MANSION, *April 1, 1861*

HON. W. H. SEWARD.

*My Dear Sir:* Since parting with you I have been considering your paper dated this day, and entitled "Some  
5 Thoughts for the President's Consideration." The first proposition in it is, "First, We are at the end of a month's administration, and yet without a policy either domestic or foreign."

At the beginning of that month, in the inaugural, I said:  
10 "The power confided to me will be used to hold, occupy, and possess the property and places belonging to the government, and to collect the duties and imposts." This had your distinct approval at the time; and, taken in connection with the order I immediately gave General Scott,  
15 directing him to employ every means in his power to strengthen and hold the forts, comprises the exact domestic policy you now urge, with the single exception that it does not propose to abandon Fort Sumter.

Again, I do not perceive how the reinforcement of Fort  
20 Sumter would be done on a slavery or a party issue, while that of Fort Pickens would be on a more national and patriotic one.

The news received yesterday in regard to St. Domingo certainly brings a new item within the range of our foreign  
25 policy; but up to that time we have been preparing circulars and instruction to ministers and the like, all in perfect harmony, without even a suggestion that we had no foreign policy.

Upon your closing propositions—that “whatever policy we adopt, there must be an energetic prosecution of it.”

“For this purpose it must be somebody’s business to pursue and direct it incessantly.”

“Either the President must do it himself, and be all the while active in it, or 5

“Devolve it on some member of his cabinet. Once adopted, debates on it must end, and all agree and abide”— I remark that if this must be done, I must do it. When a general line of policy is adopted, I apprehend there is no 10 danger of its being changed without good reason, or continuing to be a subject of unnecessary debate; still, upon points arising in its progress I wish, and suppose I am entitled to have, the advice of all the cabinet.

Your obedient servant, 15

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO GENERAL McCLELLAN

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON

February 3, 1862

MAJOR-GENERAL McCLELLAN.

*My Dear Sir:* You and I have distinct and different  
5 plans for a movement of the Army of the Potomac—yours  
to be down the Chesapeake, up the Rappahannock to  
Urbana, and across land to the terminus of the railroad  
on the York River; mine to move directly to a point on  
the railroad southwest of Manassas.

10 If you will give me satisfactory answers to the following  
questions, I shall gladly yield my plan to yours.

*First.* Does not your plan involve a greatly larger ex-  
penditure of time and money than mine?

15 *Second.* Wherein is a victory more certain by your plan  
than mine?

*Third.* Wherein is a victory more valuable by your plan  
than mine?

20 *Fourth.* In fact, would it not be less valuable in this, that  
it would break no great line of the enemy's communica-  
tions, while mine would?

*Fifth.* In case of disaster, would not a retreat be more  
difficult by your plan than mine?

Yours truly,

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.



## LETTER TO HORACE GREELEY

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON

August 22, 1862

HON. HORACE GREELEY.

*Dear Sir:* I have just read yours of the 19th, addressed to myself through the *New York Tribune*. If there be in it any statements or assumptions of fact which I may know to be erroneous, I do not, now and here, controvert them. If there be in it any inferences which I may believe to be falsely drawn, I do not, now and here, argue against them. If there be perceptible in it an impatient and dictatorial tone, I waive it in deference to an old friend whose heart I have always supposed to be right.

As to the policy I "seem to be pursuing," as you say, I have not meant to leave any one in doubt.

I would save the Union. I would save it the shortest way under the Constitution. The sooner the national authority can be restored, the nearer the Union will be "the Union as it was." If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time save slavery, I do not agree with them. If there be those who would not save the Union unless they could at the same time destroy slavery, I do not agree with them. My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union, and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave, I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone, I would also do that. What I do about slavery and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do not

believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do less whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors, and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be  
5 true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my view of official duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men everywhere could be free.

10

Yours,  
A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO GENERAL JOSEPH HOOKER

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, D. C.

*January 2, 1863*

MAJOR-GENERAL HOOKER.

*General:* I have placed you at the head of the Army of the Potomac. Of course I have done this upon what appear to me to be sufficient reasons, and yet I think it best for you to know that there are some things in regard to which I am not quite satisfied with you. I believe you to be a brave and skilful soldier, which of course I like. I also believe you do not mix politics with your profession, in which you are right. You have confidence in yourself, which is a valuable if not an indispensable quality. You are ambitious, which, within reasonable bounds, does good rather than harm; but I think that during General Burnside's command of the army you have taken counsel of your ambition and thwarted him as much as you could, in which you did a great wrong to the country and to a most meritorious and honorable brother officer. I have heard, in such a way as to believe it, of your recently saying that both the army and the government needed a dictator. Of course it was not for this, but in spite of it, that I have given you the command. Only those generals who gain successes can set up dictators. What I now ask of you is military success, and I will risk the dictatorship. The government will support you to the utmost of its ability, which is neither more nor less than it has done and will do for all commanders. I much fear that the spirit which you have aided to infuse into the army, of criticising their commander and withholding confidence from him, will

now turn upon you. I shall assist you as far as I can to put it down. Neither you nor Napoleon, if he were alive again, could get any good out of an army while such a spirit prevails in it; and now beware of rashness. Beware  
5 of rashness, but with energy and sleepless vigilance go forward and give us victories.

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

# REPLY TO A COMMITTEE FROM CHICAGO ON THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

SEPTEMBER 13, 1862

THE subject presented in the memorial is one upon which I have thought much for weeks past, and I may even say for months. I am approached with the most opposite opinions and advice, and that by religious men who are equally certain that they represent the divine will. I am 5 sure that either the one or the other class is mistaken in that belief, and perhaps in some respects both. I hope it will not be irreverent for me to say that if it is probable that God would reveal His will to others on a point so connected with my duty, it might be supposed He would reveal 10 it directly to me; for, unless I am more deceived in myself than I often am, it is my earnest desire to know the will of Providence in this matter. And if I can learn what it is, I will do it. These are not, however, the days of miracles, and I suppose it will be granted that I am not to expect a 15 direct revelation. I must study the plain physical facts of the case, ascertain what is possible, and learn what appears to be wise and right.

The subject is difficult, and good men do not agree. For instance, the other day four gentlemen of standing and 20 intelligence from New York called as a delegation on business connected with the war; but, before leaving, two of them earnestly beset me to proclaim general emancipation; upon which the other two at once attacked them. You know also that the last session of Congress had a decided 25 majority of antislavery men, yet they could not unite on this policy. And the same is true of the religious people.

Why, the rebel soldiers are praying with a great deal more earnestness, I fear, than our own troops, and expecting God to favor their side; for one of our soldiers who had been taken prisoner told Senator Wilson a few days since  
5 that he met with nothing so discouraging as the evident sincerity of those he was among in their prayers. But we will talk over the merits of the case.

What good would a proclamation of emancipation from me do, especially as we are now situated? I do not want  
10 to issue a document that the whole world will see must necessarily be inoperative, like the Pope's bull against the comet. Would my word free the slaves, when I cannot even enforce the Constitution in the rebel States? Is there a single court, or magistrate, or individual that would  
15 be influenced by it there? And what reason is there to think it would have any greater effect upon the slaves than the late law of Congress, which I approved, and which offers protection and freedom to the slaves of rebel masters who come within our lines? Yet I cannot learn that that  
20 law has caused a single slave to come over to us. And suppose they could be induced by a proclamation of freedom from me to throw themselves upon us, what should we do with them? How can we feed and care for such a multitude? General Butler wrote me a few days since that  
25 he was issuing more rations to the slaves who have rushed to him than to all the white troops under his command. They eat, and that is all; though it is true General Butler is feeding the whites also by the thousand, for it nearly amounts to a famine there. If, now, the pressure of the  
30 war should call off our forces from New Orleans to defend some other point, what is to prevent the masters from reducing the blacks to slavery again? For I am told that whenever the rebels take any black prisoners, free or slave, they immediately auction them off. They did so with



those they took from a boat that was aground in the Tennessee River a few days ago. And then I am very ungenerously attacked for it! For instance, when, after the late battles at and near Bull Run, an expedition went out from Washington under a flag of truce to bury the dead and 5 bring in the wounded, and the rebels seized the blacks who went along to help, and sent them into slavery, Horace Greeley said in his paper that the government would probably do nothing about it. What could I do?

Now, then, tell me, if you please, what possible result of 10 good would follow the issuing of such a proclamation as you desire? Understand, I raise no objections against it on legal or constitutional grounds; for, as commander-in-chief of the army and navy, in time of war I suppose I have a right to take any measure which may best subdue 15 the enemy; nor do I urge objections of a moral nature, in view of possible consequences of insurrection and massacre at the South. I view this matter as a practical war measure, to be decided on according to the advantages or disadvantages it may offer to the suppression of the rebellion. 20

I admit that slavery is the root of the rebellion, or at least its *sine qua non*. The ambition of politicians may have instigated them to act, but they would have been impotent without slavery as their instrument. I will also concede that emancipation would help us in Europe, and 25 convince them that we are incited by something more than ambition. I grant, further, that it would help somewhat at the North, though not so much, I fear, as you and those you represent imagine. Still, some additional strength would be added in that way to the war; and then, unquestionably, it would weaken the rebels by drawing off their 30 laborers, which is of great importance; but I am not so sure we could do much with the blacks. If we were to arm them, I fear that in a few weeks the arms would be in the

hands of the rebels; and, indeed, thus far we have not had arms enough to equip our white troops. I will mention another thing, though it meet only your scorn and contempt. There are fifty thousand bayonets in the Union  
5 armies from the border slave States. It would be a serious matter if, in consequence of a proclamation such as you desire, they should go over to the rebels. I do not think they all would—not so many, indeed, as a year ago, or as six months ago—not so many to-day as yesterday. Every  
10 day increases their Union feeling. They are also getting their pride enlisted, and want to beat the rebels. Let me say one thing more. I think you should admit that we already have an important principle to rally and unite the people, in fact that constitutional government is at stake.  
15 This is a fundamental idea going down about as deep as anything.

Do not misunderstand me because I have mentioned these objections. They indicate the difficulties that have thus far prevented my action in some such way as you  
20 desire. I have not decided against a proclamation of liberty to the slaves, but hold the matter under advisement; and I can assure you that the subject is on my mind, by day and night, more than any other. Whatever shall appear to be God's will, I will do. I trust that in the free-  
25 dom with which I have canvassed your views I have not in any respect injured your feelings.

# THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

JANUARY 1, 1863

WHEREAS, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

“That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free; and the Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

“That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof respectively shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall in the absence of strong countervailing testimony be deemed conclusive evidence that such State and the people thereof are not then in rebellion against the United States.”

Now, therefore, I, Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States, in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit  
5 and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do, publicly proclaimed for the full  
10 period of 100 days from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof, respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit:

Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana (except the parishes of St.  
15 Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terre Bonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the city of New Orleans), Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia  
20 (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkeley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth), and which excepted parts are for the present left precisely as  
25 if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States and parts of States are, and henceforward shall be, free; and that the executive govern-  
30 ment of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-

defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known that such persons of suitable condition will be received into the armed service of the United States to garrison forts, positions, 5 stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind 10 and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

## REPLY TO THE WORKINGMEN OF MANCHESTER

JANUARY 19, 1863

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the address and resolutions which you sent me on the eve of the New Year. When I came, on the 4th of March, 1861, through a free and constitutional election, to preside in  
5 the government of the United States, the country was found at the verge of civil war. Whatever might have been the cause, or whosoever the fault, one duty paramount to all others was before me; namely, to maintain and preserve at once the Constitution and the integrity of the  
10 Federal Republic. A conscientious purpose to perform this duty is the key to all the measures of administration which have been, and to all which will hereafter be, pursued. Under our frame of government and by my official oath, I could not depart from this purpose if I would. It is not  
15 always in the power of governments to enlarge or restrict the scope of moral results which follow the policies that they may deem it necessary for the public safety from time to time to adopt.

I have understood well that the duty of self-preservation  
20 rests solely with the American people; but I have at the same time been aware that favor or disfavor of foreign nations might have a material influence in enlarging or prolonging the struggle with disloyal men in which the country is engaged. A fair examination of history has  
25 served to authorize a belief that the past actions and influences of the United States were generally regarded as



having been beneficial toward mankind. I have therefore reckoned upon the forbearance of nations. Circumstances, to some of which you kindly allude, induce me especially to expect that if justice and good faith should be practised by the United States, they would encounter no hostile influence on the part of Great Britain. It is now a pleasant duty to acknowledge the demonstration you have given of your desire that a spirit of amity and peace toward this country may prevail in the councils of your queen, who is respected and esteemed in your own country only more than she is by the kindred nation which has its home on this side of the Atlantic. 5 10

I know and deeply deplore the sufferings which the workingmen at Manchester, and in all Europe, are called to endure in this crisis. It has been often and studiously represented that the attempt to overthrow this government, which was built upon the foundation of human rights, and to substitute for it one which should rest exclusively on the basis of human slavery, was likely to obtain the favor of Europe. Through the action of our disloyal citizens, the workingmen of Europe have been subjected to severe trials, for the purpose of forcing their sanction to that attempt. Under the circumstances, I cannot but regard your decisive utterances upon the question as an instance of sublime Christian heroism, which has not been surpassed in any age or in any country. It is indeed an energetic and reinspiring assurance of the inherent power of truth, and of the ultimate and universal triumph of justice, humanity, and freedom. I do not doubt that the sentiments you have expressed will be sustained by your great nation; and, on the other hand, I have no hesitation in assuring you that they will excite admiration, esteem, and the most reciprocal feelings of friendship among the American people. I hail this interchange of 15 20 25 30

sentiment, therefore, as an augury that whatever else may happen, whatever misfortune may befall your country or my own, the peace and friendship which now exist between the two nations will be, as it shall be my desire to make  
5 them, perpetual.

## REPLY TO J. C. CONKLING

DATED AUGUST 26, 1863

MY DEAR SIR: Your letter inviting me to attend a mass-meeting of unconditional Union men, to be held at the capital of Illinois on the third day of September, has been received. It would be very agreeable to me to thus meet my old friends at my own home, but I cannot just now be absent from here so long as a visit there would require. 5

The meeting is to be of all those who maintain unconditional devotion to the Union; and I am sure my old political friends will thank me for tendering, as I do, the nation's gratitude to those and other noble men whom no partisan malice or partisan hope can make false to the nation's life. 10

There are those who are dissatisfied with me. To such I would say: You desire peace, and you blame me that we do not have it. But how can we attain it? There are but three conceivable ways. First, to suppress the rebellion by force of arms. This I am trying to do. Are you for it? If you are, so far we are agreed. If you are not for it, a second way is to give up the Union. I am against this. Are you for it? If you are, you should say so plainly. If you are not for force, nor yet for dissolution, there only remains some imaginable compromise. I do not believe any compromise embracing maintenance of the Union is now possible. All I learn leads to a directly opposite belief. The strength of the rebellion is its military, its army. That army dominates all the country and all the people within its range. Any offer of terms made by any man or men within that range, in opposition to that army, is simply nothing for the present, because such man or men have 20 25

no power whatever to enforce their side of a compromise, if one were made with them.

To illustrate: Suppose refugees from the South and peace men of the North get together in convention, and  
5 frame and proclaim a compromise embracing a restoration of the Union. In what way can that compromise be used to keep Lee's army out of Pennsylvania? Meade's army can keep Lee's out of Pennsylvania, and, I think, can ultimately drive it out of existence. But no paper com-  
10 promise, to which the controllers of Lee's army are not agreed, can at all affect that army. In an effort at such compromise we should waste time which the enemy would improve to our disadvantage; and that would be all. A compromise, to be effective, must be made either with those  
15 who control the rebel army, or with the people first liberated from the domination of that army by the success of our own army. Now, allow me to assure you that no word or intimation from that rebel army, or from any of the men controlling it, in relation to any peace compromise,  
20 has ever come to my knowledge or belief. All charges and insinuations to the contrary are deceptive and groundless. And I promise you that if any such proposition shall hereafter come, it shall not be rejected and kept a secret from you. I freely acknowledge myself the servant of the peo-  
25 ple, according to the bond of service,—the United States Constitution,—and that, as such, I am responsible to them.

But to be plain. You are dissatisfied with me about the negro. Quite likely there is a difference of opinion between you and myself upon that subject. I certainly wish that  
30 all men could be free, while I suppose you do not. Yet I have neither adopted nor proposed any measure which is not consistent with even your views, provided you are for the Union. I suggested compensated emancipation, to which you replied, you wished not to be taxed to buy

negroes. But I had not asked you to be taxed to buy negroes, except in such way as to save you from greater taxation to save the Union exclusively by other means.

You dislike the Emancipation Proclamation, and perhaps would have it retracted. You say it is unconstitutional. I think differently. I think the Constitution invests its commander-in-chief with the law of war in time of war. The most that can be said—if so much—is that slaves are property. Is there, has there ever been, any question that, by law of war, property, both of enemies and friends, may be taken when needed? And is it not needed whenever taking it helps us or hurts the enemy? Armies the world over destroy enemies' property when they cannot use it, and even destroy their own to keep it from the enemy. Civilized belligerents do all in their power to help themselves or hurt the enemy, except a few things regarded as barbarous or cruel. Among the exceptions are the massacre of vanquished foes and non-combatants, male and female.

But the proclamation, as law, either is valid or is not valid. If it is not valid, it needs no retraction. If it is valid, it cannot be retracted any more than the dead man can be brought to life. Some of you profess to think its retraction would operate favorably for the Union. Why better after the retraction than before the issue? There was more than a year and a half of trial to suppress the rebellion before the proclamation was issued, the last one hundred days of which passed under an explicit notice that it was coming, unless averted by those in revolt turning to their allegiance. The war has certainly progressed as favorably for us since the issue of the proclamation as before. I know, as fully as one can know the opinions of others, that some of the commanders of our armies in the field who have given us our most important success, believe

the emancipation policy and the use of colored troops constitute the heaviest blow yet dealt to the rebellion, and that at least one of these important successes could not have been achieved when it was but for the aid of black  
5 soldiers. Among the commanders holding these views are some who have never had any affinity with what is called Abolitionism or with Republican party politics, but who hold them purely as military opinions. I submit these opinions as being entitled to some weight against the ob-  
10 jections often urged, that emancipation and arming the blacks are unwise as military measures, and were not adopted as such in good faith.

You say you will not fight to free negroes. Some of them seem willing to fight for you; but no matter. Fight you,  
15 then, exclusively to save the Union. I issued the proclamation on purpose to aid you in saving the Union. Whenever you shall have conquered all resistance to the Union, if I shall urge you to continue fighting, it will be an apt time then for you to declare you will not fight to free negroes.

20 I thought that in your struggle for the Union, to whatever extent the negroes should cease helping the enemy, to that extent it weakened the enemy in his resistance to you. Do you think differently? I thought that whatever negroes could be got to do as soldiers leaves just so much less for  
25 white soldiers to do in saving the Union. Does it appear otherwise to you? But negroes, like other people, act upon motives. Why should they do anything for us, if we will do nothing for them? If they stake their lives for us, they must be prompted by the strongest motive, even the  
30 promise of freedom. And the promise being made, must be kept.

The signs look better. The Father of Waters again goes unvexed to the sea. Thanks to the great Northwest for it. Nor yet wholly to them. Three hundred miles up they



met New England, Empire, Keystone, and Jersey hewing their way right and left. The sunny South, too, in more colors than one, also lent a hand. On the spot, their part of the history was jotted down in black and white. The job was done by a great nation, and let none be banned who bore an honorable part in it. And while those who cleared the great river may well be proud, even that is not all. It is hard to say that anything has been more bravely and well done than at Antietam, Murfreesboro, Gettysburg, and on many fields of lesser note. Nor must Uncle Sam's web feet be forgotten. At all the watery margins they have been present. Not only on the deep sea, the broad bay, and the rapid river, but also up the narrow, muddy bayou, and wherever the ground was a little damp, they have been and made their tracks. Thanks to all,—for the great republic, for the principle it lives by and keeps alive, for man's vast future,—thanks to all.

Peace does not appear so distant as it did. I hope it will come soon, and come to stay; and so come as to be worth the keeping in all future time. It will then have been proved that among freemen there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the bullet, and that they who take such appeal are sure to lose their case and pay the cost. And then there will be some black men who can remember that with silent tongue, and clenched teeth, and steady eye, and well-poised bayonet, they have helped mankind on this great consummation, while I fear there will be some white ones unable to forget that with malignant heart and deceitful speech they strove to hinder it.

Still, let us not be oversanguine of a speedy, final triumph. Let us be quite sober. Let us diligently apply the means, never doubting that a just God, in His own good time, will give us the rightful result.

## ADDRESS AT GETTYSBURG

NOVEMBER 19, 1863

FOURSCORE and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

5 Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battle-field of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that  
10 that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated  
15 it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It  
20 is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation,  
25 under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

## LETTER TO GENERAL U. S. GRANT

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON

*April 30, 1864*

LIEUTENANT GENERAL GRANT:

Not expecting to see you again before the spring campaign opens, I wish to express in this way my entire satisfaction with what you have done up to this time, so far as I understand it. The particulars of your plans I neither know nor seek to know. You are vigilant and self-reliant; and, pleased with this, I wish not to obtrude any constraints or restraints upon you. While I am very anxious that any great disaster or capture of our men in great numbers shall be avoided, I know these points are less likely to escape your attention than they would be mine. If there is anything wanting which is within my power to give, do not fail to let me know it. And now, with a brave army and a just cause, may God sustain you. •

Yours very truly,

A. LINCOLN.

## LETTER TO MRS. BIXBY OF BOSTON

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON

November 21, 1864

MRS. BIXBY, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS.

*Dear Madam:* I have been shown in the files of the War  
5 Department a statement of the Adjutant-General of  
Massachusetts that you are the mother of five sons who  
have died gloriously on the field of battle. I feel how weak  
and fruitless must be any words of mine which should at-  
tempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelm-  
10 ing. But I cannot refrain from tendering to you the con-  
solation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic  
they died to save. I pray that our heavenly Father may  
assuage the anguish of your bereavement, and leave you  
only the cherished memory of the loved and lost, and the  
15 solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a  
sacrifice upon the altar of freedom.

Yours very sincerely and respectfully,  
ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

## THE SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS

MARCH 4, 1865

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN: At this second appearing to take the oath of the presidential office, there is less occasion for an extended address than there was at the first. Then a statement, somewhat in detail, of a course to be pursued, seemed fitting and proper. Now, at the expiration of four years, during which public declarations have been constantly called forth on every point and phase of the great contest which still absorbs the attention and engrosses the energies of the nation, little that is new could be presented. The progress of our arms, upon which all else chiefly depends, is as well known to the public as to myself; and it is, I trust, reasonably satisfactory and encouraging to all. With high hope for the future, no prediction in regard to it is ventured. 5

On the occasion corresponding to this four years ago, all thoughts were anxiously directed to an impending civil war. All dreaded it—all sought to avert it. While the inaugural address was being delivered from this place, devoted altogether to saving the Union without war, insurgent agents were in the city seeking to destroy it without war—seeking to dissolve the Union, and divide effects, by negotiation. Both parties deprecated war; but one of them would make war rather than let the nation survive; and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came. 15 20 25

One-eighth of the whole population were colored slaves, not distributed generally over the Union, but localized in the southern part of it. These slaves constituted a peculiar

and powerful interest. All knew that this interest was, somehow, the cause of the war. To strengthen, perpetuate, and extend this interest was the object for which the insurgents would rend the Union even by war; while  
5 the Government claimed no right to do more than to restrict the territorial enlargement of it.

Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or  
10 even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just  
15 God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered—that of neither has been answered fully.

The Almighty has His own purpose. "Woe unto the  
20 world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God, must needs come, but which, having continued through His appointed time,  
25 He now wills to remove, and that He gives to both North and South this terrible war, as the woe to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from those divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to Him? Fondly do we hope—fer-  
30 vently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by



another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us 5  
strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan—to do all which  
may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace among  
ourselves, and with all nations. 10

## LAST PUBLIC ADDRESS

APRIL 11, 1865

WE meet this evening not in sorrow, but in gladness of heart. The evacuation of Petersburg and Richmond, and the surrender of the principal insurgent army, give hope of a righteous and speedy peace, whose joyous expression  
5 cannot be restrained. In the midst of this, however, He from whom all blessings flow must not be forgotten. A call for a national thanksgiving is being prepared, and will be duly promulgated. Nor must those whose harder part gave us the cause of rejoicing be overlooked. Their honors  
10 must not be parcelled out with others. I myself was near the front, and had the high pleasure of transmitting much of the good news to you; but no part of the honor for plan or execution is mine. To General Grant, his skilful officers and brave men, all belongs. The gallant navy stood ready,  
15 but was not in reach to take active part.

By these recent successes the reinauguration of the national authority—reconstruction—which has had a large share of thought from the first, is pressed more closely upon our attention. It is fraught with great difficulty.  
20 Unlike a case of war between independent nations, there is no authorized organ for us to treat with—no one man has authority to give up the rebellion for any other man. We simply must begin with and mold from disorganized and discordant elements. Nor is it a small additional em-  
25 barrassment that we, the loyal people, differ among ourselves as to the mode, manner, and measure of reconstruction. As a general rule, I abstain from reading the reports of attacks upon myself, wishing not to be provoked by that

to which I cannot properly offer an answer. In spite of this precaution, however, it comes to my knowledge that I am much censured for some supposed agency in setting up and seeking to sustain the new State government of Louisiana.

In this I have done just so much as, and no more than, the public knows. In the annual message of December, 1863, and in the accompanying proclamation, I presented a plan of reconstruction, as the phrase goes, which I promised, if adopted by any State, should be acceptable to and sustained by the executive government of the nation. I distinctly stated that this was not the only plan which might possibly be acceptable, and also distinctly protested that the executive claimed no right to say when or whether members should be admitted to seats in Congress from such States. This plan was in advance submitted to the then Cabinet and distinctly approved by every member of it. One of them suggested that I should then and in that connection apply the Emancipation Proclamation to the theretofore excepted parts of Virginia and Louisiana; that I should drop the suggestion about apprenticeship for freed people, and that I should omit the protest against my own power in regard to the admission of members to Congress. But even he approved every part and parcel of the plan which has since been employed or touched by the action of Louisiana.

The new constitution of Louisiana, declaring emancipation for the whole State, practically applies the proclamation to the part previously excepted. It does not adopt apprenticeship for freed people, and it is silent, as it could not well be otherwise, about the admission of members to Congress. So that, as it applies to Louisiana, every member of the Cabinet fully approved the plan. The message went to Congress, and I received many commendations

of the plan, written and verbal, and not a single objection to it from any professed emancipationist came to my knowledge until after the news reached Washington that the people of Louisiana had begun to move in accordance  
5 with it. From about July, 1862, I had corresponded with different persons supposed to be interested in seeking a reconstruction of a State government for Louisiana. When the message of 1863, with the plan before mentioned, reached New Orleans, General Banks wrote me that  
10 he was confident that the people, with his military cooperation, would reconstruct substantially on that plan. I wrote to him and some of them to try it. They tried it, and the result is known. Such has been my only agency in getting up the Louisiana government.

15 As to sustaining it, my promise is out, as before stated. But as bad promises are better broken than kept, I shall treat this as a bad promise, and break it whenever I shall be convinced that keeping it is adverse to the public interest; but I have not yet been so convinced. I have been  
20 shown a letter on this subject, supposed to be an able one, in which the writer expresses regret that my mind has not seemed to be definitely fixed on the question whether the seceded States, so called, are in the Union or out of it. It would perhaps add astonishment to his regret were he to  
25 learn that since I have found professed Union men endeavoring to make that question, I have purposely forbore any public expression upon it. As appears to me, that question has not been, nor yet is, a practically material one, and that any discussion of it, while it thus re-  
30 mains practically immaterial, could have no effect other than the mischievous one of dividing our friends. As yet, whatever it may hereafter become, that question is bad as the basis of a controversy, and good for nothing at all—a merely pernicious abstraction.

We all agree that the seceded States, so called, are out of their proper practical relation with the Union, and that the sole object of the government, civil and military, in regard to those States is to again get them into that proper practical relation. I believe that it is not only possible, 5 but in fact easier, to do this without deciding or even considering whether these States have ever been out of the Union, than with it. Finding themselves safely at home it would be utterly immaterial whether they had ever been abroad. Let us all join in doing the acts necessary to restoring the proper practical relations between these States and the Union, and each forever after innocently indulge his own opinion whether in doing the acts he brought the States from without into the Union, or only gave them proper assistance, they never having been out of it. The 15 amount of constituency, so to speak, on which the new Louisiana government rests would be more satisfactory to all if it contained 50,000, or 30,000, or even 20,000, instead of only about 12,000, as it does. It is also unsatisfactory to some that the elective franchise is not given to the 20 colored man. I would myself prefer that it were now conferred on the very intelligent, and on those who serve our cause as soldiers.

Still, the question is not whether the Louisiana government, as it stands, is quite all that is desirable. The question is, will it be wiser to take it as it is and help to improve it, or to reject and disperse it? Can Louisiana be brought into proper practical relations with the Union sooner by sustaining or discarding her new State government? Some twelve thousand voters in the heretofore slave State of 30 Louisiana have sworn allegiance to the Union, assumed to be the rightful political power of the State, held elections, organized a State government, adopted a free-State constitution, giving the benefit of public schools equally to

black and white, and empowering the legislature to confer the elective franchise upon the colored man. Their legislature has already voted to ratify the constitutional amendment recently passed by Congress, abolishing slavery throughout the nation. These 12,000 persons are thus fully committed to the Union and to perpetual freedom in the State—committed to the very things and nearly all the things, the nation wants—and they ask the nation's recognition and its assistance to make good their committal.

Now, if we reject and spurn them, we do our utmost to disorganize and disperse them. We, in effect, say to the white man: You are worthless or worse; we will neither help you, nor be helped by you. To the blacks we say: This cup of liberty which these, your old masters, hold to your lips we will dash from you, and leave you to the chances of gathering the spilled and scattered contents in some vague and undefined when, where, and how. If this course, discouraging and paralyzing both white and black, has any tendency to bring Louisiana into proper practical relations with the Union, I have so far been unable to perceive it. If, on the contrary, we recognize and sustain the new government of Louisiana, the converse of all this is made true. We encourage the hearts and nerve the arms of the 12,000 to adhere to their work, and argue for it, and proselyte for it, and fight for it, and feel it, and grow it, and ripen it to a complete success. The colored man, too, in seeing all united for him, is inspired with vigilance, and energy, and daring, to the same end. Grant that he desires the elective franchise, will he not attain it sooner by saving the already advanced steps toward it than by running backward over them? Concede that the new government of Louisiana is only to what it should be as the egg is to the fowl, we shall sooner have the fowl by hatching the egg than by smashing it.



Again, if we reject Louisiana we also reject one vote in favor of the proposed amendment to the national Constitution. To meet this proposition, it has been argued that no more than three fourths of those States which have not attempted secession are necessary to validly ratify the amendment. I do not commit myself against this further than to say that such a ratification would be questionable, and sure to be persistently questioned, while a ratification by three fourths of all the States would be unquestioned and unquestionable. I repeat the question: Can Louisiana be brought into proper practical relation with the Union sooner by sustaining or by discarding her new State government? What has been said of Louisiana will apply generally to other States. And yet so great peculiarities pertain to each State, and such important and sudden changes occur in the same State and withal so new and unprecedented is the whole case that no exclusive and inflexible plan can safely be prescribed as to details and collaterals. Such exclusive and inflexible plan would surely become a new entanglement. Important principles may and must be inflexible. In the present situation, as the phrase goes, it may be my duty to make some new announcement to the people of the South. I am considering, and shall not fail to act when satisfied that action will be proper.



## NOTES AND COMMENT

(Heavy numerals refer to page; light ones to line)

### MACAULAY'S SPEECHES ON COPYRIGHT

**3, 1. Sir:** the Speaker of the House of Commons, Charles Shaw Lefevre, of Hampton, who held that office from 1839 to 1857.

**3, 7. My honorable and learned friend:** Thomas Noon Talfourd (1795-1834), a famous dramatist, essayist, lawyer, and judge, known as Sergeant Talfourd, the author of the bill Macaulay arose to discuss. Macaulay prefixed the following note to this speech in the collection of his speeches which he himself edited in 1853:

"On the twenty-ninth of January, 1841, Mr. Sergeant Talfourd obtained leave to bring in a bill to amend the law of copyright. The object of this bill was to extend the term of copyright in a book to sixty years, reckoned from the death of the writer. On the fifth of February Mr. Sergeant Talfourd moved that the bill should be read a second time. In reply to him the following speech was made. The bill was rejected by 45 votes to 38."

**3, 23. Indefeasible.** Study the derivation of this word.

**4, 15. Paley:** William Paley (1743-1805), a well known theologian and philosopher, educated at Cambridge University and raised to a high position in the English Church. His *Principles of Moral and Political Philosophy* was probably the book which Macaulay had in mind.

**5, 8. Primogeniture, or gavelkind, or borough English.** Read carefully the passage above, beginning with "the modes of succession in the Queen's dominions are twenty," and frame your own definition of each of these technical terms. What point is Macaulay trying to make?

**5, 9. Jure divino:** "by divine law."

**5, 10. Pars rationabilis:** "Equally reasonable."

**5, 22. Existing law [of copyright.]** See the references on copyright in the Descriptive Bibliography.

**7, 9. Mæcenas and Pollio:** an example of Macaulay's remarkable power of illustration. The persons mentioned in this sentence were all noted patrons of men of letters. Mæcenas and Pollio were the

friends and helpers of Vergil, Horace and other literary Romans of the first century B. C. The **Medici** became prominent in Florence in the 14th century and ruled it for several generations. Lorenzo (1448-1492) was particularly successful in fostering letters. **Lewis the Fourteenth**, usually spelled Louis: King of France from 1643 to 1715. He founded academies of belles-lettres, the sciences, and painting and sculpture, and encouraged the work of such great writers and artists as Racine, Molière, Boileau, Lebrun and Claude Lorrain. **Lord Halifax** (1661-1715) and **Lord Oxford** (1661-1724) each attained to great influence at the Court of England, the former in the reign of William and the latter in the reign of Anne. Who were the great writers of their time?

**8, 15. The East India Company** was founded by certain London merchants in 1600 for the purpose of competing with the Dutch for the East India trade. About the middle of the eighteenth century, under Clive and Hastings, the company became supreme in India, both commercially and politically. Great abuses, which culminated in the Indian Mutiny of 1857, led the government to abolish the company the following year.

**8, 17. Elizabeth's reign** (1558-1603). Find in a good history of England an account of the monopolies to which Queen Elizabeth's subjects objected.

**8, 31. Lord Essex's.** Robert Devereux, Second Earl of Essex (1567-1604) became a favorite of Queen Elizabeth and was granted many special privileges. He lost his influence with her, however, and was ultimately executed on a charge of treason.

**9, 28. Australasian continent.** What parts of Australia were settled at the time Macaulay was speaking?

**10, 2. Prince Esterhazy** (1786-1866) was a Hungarian nobleman who owned more extensive estates than any other landholder in the Austrian Empire.

**10, 8. Dr. Johnson:** Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), the most influential literary man of his time. What books did he write besides those mentioned in this paragraph? Are his books much read now? Why?

**10, 24. Juvenal** (47-138 A. D.) was the greatest of the Roman satirists. Johnson imitated Juvenal in *London* and *The Vanity of Human Wishes*.

**10, 25. Our debates.** Johnson cleverly made up from the notes of paid listeners the speeches which the members of Parliament were delivering.

**11, 1. A man like Dr. Johnson.** Macaulay wrote an essay on *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, which was published in the *Edinburgh Review*, and also an account of Johnson's life for the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. What was his opinion of Johnson?

**12, 11. Blenheim.** When Anne became Queen of England the War of the Spanish Succession was in progress, the commander of the English and Dutch armies being John Churchill, Earl of Marlborough. In 1702 Marlborough captured a series of important fortresses and was made Duke by the Queen. Two years later he routed the French at the village of Blenheim on the Danube, and the English nation through Parliament bestowed upon him the royal manor of Woodstock near Oxford, upon which a magnificent palace was erected at public expense. The estate was then renamed Blenheim. It is still in possession of Marlborough's descendants, and is visited by thousands every year.

**12, 11. Strathfieldsaye**, about fifty miles southwest of London, was the seat of the Duke of Wellington, victor at Waterloo.

**13, 3. Charles the Second's reign** began in 1660 and ended in 1685.

**13, 4. Cowley's "Poems"** were during his lifetime (1608-1674) more popular than those of Milton.

**13, 5. Pope.** Alexander Pope (1688-1744) was the leading poet in England during the first part of the eighteenth century. His verse satires are celebrated, and he attained prominence as a critic. The question: "Who now reads Cowley?" will be found in his *Imitation of the First Epistle of the Second Book of Horace*, line 75.

**13, 8. Lord Bolingbroke.** Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (1678-1751) was a brilliant English orator and politician. He had an easy command of language but lacked depth and sincerity; hence what he wrote had no lasting value. The "works" to which Macaulay refers were the *Philosophical Writings*, edited by David Mallet.

**13, 11. Paternoster Row**, so called because prayer-books were sold there, is a short street just north of St. Paul's Cathedral. It is still the center of the London book trade.

**13, 12. Hayley's.** William Hayley (1745-1820), a now forgotten verse writer, had a considerable reputation in his own day. In his *Essay on Byron* Macaulay says: "Poetry had sunk into such decay that Mr. Hayley was thought a great poet." Byron ridicules the "Triumphs of Temper" in his "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers," and Southey, one of Hayley's intimate friends, wrote that everything was good about him except his poetry.

**13, 31. Garrick.** David Garrick (1716-1779) was a pupil and intimate of Dr. Johnson and became one of the greatest of English actors. The benefit for Mrs. Elizabeth Foster, Milton's granddaughter, was given April 5, 1750. See Boswell's *Johnson*.

**14, 14. Tonson.** Jacob Tonson (1707-1754) was the publisher of Dryden's works and issued the first complete octavo edition of Shakespeare, as well as the first good edition of Milton's poems. He was publisher and associate of all the fashionable literary men of his day; helped to found and was secretary of the famous Kit Kat Club, a society of wits; and may be said to be the father of the publishing business in England.

**15, 14. Fielding's Novels.** Henry Fielding (1707-1754), after a successful career as a playwright and manager of a theater, became a novelist and wrote *The Adventures of Joseph Andrews*, 1742, *The History of Tom Jones*, 1749, and *Amelia*, 1751. These books have always been greatly admired, especially for their plot structure and characterization, and have had enormous influence on English fiction, notably in the case of Thackeray.

**15, 14. Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire** appeared in successive volumes from 1776 to 1778. It is still the standard authority for the period of which it treats, 100 A. D. to 1453 A. D., and is thought by many to be the greatest product of historical genius. The author was prejudiced, however, against Christianity.

**15, 22. Richardson's Novels** were the first English novels of domestic life. Samuel Richardson (1689-1761) was an obscure printer who undertook to compile a guide to letter-writing and almost by accident produced in 1740 the famous story of *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded*. This was followed by *Clarissa Harlowe* and *Sir Charles Grandison*. Richardson quickly became known as the creator of a new species of writing and, indeed, deserves to be called the founder of the novel, though few now have the courage to read his books on account of their length.

**16, 1. Mr. Wilberforce.** William Wilberforce (1759-1833) in 1797 published *A Practical View of the Prevailing Religious System of Professed Christians contrasted with Real Christianity*. It ran through five editions before the end of the year and by 1826 had reached the fifteenth edition. Wilberforce was one of the leading opponents of slavery in Parliament and was an intimate friend of Macaulay's father. See Chapter One in Trevelyan's *Life of Macaulay*.



**16, 13. Mistress Hannah More** (1745-1833) was one of the Johnson coterie and became a successful playwright. She became convinced, however, that the stage was immoral in its tendencies and turned her attention to the writing of moral and religious books. She was especially interested in the education of girls, for whom she conducted a seminary; and her most popular book, *Cælebs in Search of a Wife* deals with that subject. Macaulay was often at her house when a boy and received from her the money to buy his first books. See Trevelyan's *Life*.

**17, 19. Boswell's Life of Johnson** probably is, as Macaulay says below, "the finest biographical work in the world." One of its rivals is Trevelyan's biography of Macaulay himself. James Boswell (1740-1795) was a Scotchman who came to London in search of adventure and made it his business to cultivate the prominent men of the town. He succeeded in gaining the good will of Dr. Johnson and was closely associated with him for some months. Boswell then went abroad and succeeded in meeting Voltaire and others almost equally noted. Upon his return he courted the attention of William Pitt and also found a wife. At last he conceived the idea of accompanying Dr. Johnson on a tour of the Hebrides. The trip was successfully made and provided the material for Boswell's *Journal of a Tour through the Hebrides*, which he published shortly after Johnson's death. He was much with his patron, except in 1780 and 1782, until Johnson's last days, and during the following years prepared his monumental *Life*, first published in 1791. Macaulay seems to feel, with Boswell's family, that his attendance on the great literary Dictator was more or less disgraceful. See his *Life of Johnson* and his *Essay on Croker's Essay on Boswell's "Life of Johnson."* Others, notably Carlyle, have praised Boswell for his capacity of appreciating human excellence.

**17, 34. Camden's Britannia** was published in 1856. This was a description of Great Britain in Latin with the title *Britannia sive Regnorum Angliæ, Scotiæ, et Hiberniæ, ex intima Antiquitate Chorographica Descriptios*. It was translated into Latin in 1610 and was frequently revised and republished, the last edition appearing in 1806. The author was William Camden, second master in Westminster School, who should be credited as the originator of encyclopædias.

**18, 14. John Wesley** (1703-1791) was the founder of Methodism. He was educated at the famous Charterhouse School in London and at Christ's College, Oxford. There the term "Methodists" was applied derisively to a small society, of which Wesley was a member,

because of the well-ordered habits of the members. For some years Wesley was a minister in the Established Church, being for a time with Oglethorpe in the colony of Georgia. On May 1, 1738, he formed the first Methodist "society" in London, and had the satisfaction of seeing the new sect multiply so rapidly that it numbered over 80,000 members at the time of his death. By the middle of the next century, it had reached nearly half a million. Wesley's influence on the English lower classes was most salutary. The Established Church had lost its hold upon them and they were sunk in a state of indifference to religion. He was a tremendous worker, traveling on horseback 5,000 miles and preaching 500 sermons each year for nearly fifty years. His works, published in seven volumes, contain besides his sermons and theological writings, his Journals, which he began in 1726 and continued throughout his life. His hymns were published with those of his brother Charles in 1738.

**20, 14. Robinson Crusoe**, by Daniel Defoe (1661-1731), was published in 1719.

**20, 15. Pilgrim's Progress**, by John Bunyan (1628-1688), was published in 1678. Why have these two books been so widely popular? What have they in common?

**20, 32. Divide the House:** call for a vote. Taking a vote in the House of Commons is called dividing because those in favor of a measure are required to pass out into one lobby and those opposed into another.

**21, 3. Be read a second time:** equivalent to postpone indefinitely. The regular procedure in the House of Commons in the case of bills is (1) to hear the measure read and order it printed; (2) set a day for a second reading, when the principle of the measure may be discussed. If a bill passes second reading it is (3) referred to the Committee of the whole House, or a special committee, for consideration of details and amendments. When the Committee reports (4) a day is set for a third reading, and if the bill passes, it is (5) sent to the House of Lords. Should a bill be voted down on second reading, it is lost and cannot be revived until another session. Macaulay's motion was simply a formal way of killing the bill, as the House would probably not be in session six months later.

#### QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR STUDY

1. What was the situation when Macaulay arose to speak? 2. What was his purpose? How do you know? 3. Divide the speech into

Introduction, Discussion, and Conclusion. Explain what the speaker accomplished by means of each of these parts. 4. Suppose you had been present and inclined before Macaulay arose to favor the bill, what would have been your state of mind at each stage as he proceeded? 5. Sum up Macaulay's argument. What is the strongest part of it? 6. Prepare a speech in rebuttal. Where will you go for your material? 7. Select the paragraphs which seem to you most eloquent and read them aloud.

**22, 1. Mr. Greene:** Thomas Greene, member for Lancaster, Chairman of the Committee of the whole House.

**22, 5. My noble friend:** Lord Mahon (1805-1875), a distinguished historian. Macaulay reviewed his *History of the War of the Succession in Spain* in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1833. Mahon also wrote a *History of England*, which was published in 1854. Though called Lord by courtesy, Mahon had not yet succeeded to the title of Earl of Stanhope, and hence was a member of the House instead of the Lords. He sat in Parliament from 1832 to 1852.

**25, 3. Madame D'Arblay:** Frances Burney (1752-1840), one of the earliest of the women novelists of England. Her *Evelina* appeared in 1778, *Cecilia* in 1782, and *Camilla* and *The Wanderer* some years later. Through her father, a noted musician, she met Johnson, Garrick, Burke, and other prominent men and also received an appointment as assistant-keeper of the robes to Queen Charlotte. She afterward married a French refugee, General D'Arblay and published her *Memoirs of Dr. Burney* and her *Diary and Letters*, thus providing valuable documents for the history of her time. Macaulay's *Essay on Madame D'Arblay* is an excellent biography.

**25, 3. Miss Austen:** Jane Austen (1775-1817), the author of a series of novels of English country life. The order of publication, though not of writing, was as follows: *Sense and Sensibility*, 1811, *Pride and Prejudice*, 1813, *Mansfield Park*, 1814, *Emma*, 1816, *Northanger Abbey*, 1818, *Persuasion*, 1818. Though only the daughter of a village clergyman, Miss Austen observed life so well and portrayed it so skilfully that her books have had the warmest admiration of all students of fiction. With Macaulay she was a prime favorite.

**26, 5. Shakespeare.** *Love's Labor's Lost* was published in 1598, *Pericles*, *Prince of Tyre*, in 1609, *Othello* in 1622 and *Macbeth* in 1623. Shakespeare died in 1616.

**26, 9. Milton.** Macaulay refers to a number of authors mentioned in the speech of 1841. Compare the use he makes of them on the

two occasions and, if necessary, consult the notes to the earlier speech.

**26, 18. Dryden.** John Dryden (1632-1700), poet, critic, and dramatist, was the greatest man of letters in England for a generation. As Macaulay suggests, however, some of his work, particularly his comedies, has little merit. *Theodore and Honoria*, *Tancred and Sigismunda* (Sigismonda and Guiscardo) and *Cymon and Iphigenia*, are verse translations of stories from the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, an Italian writer of the fourteenth century; *Palamon and Arcite* is a version of Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*; and *Alexander's Feast* is an ode to music.

**26, 22. Flecknoe, Settle:** inferior contemporaries, whom Dryden satirized, the first in *MacFlecknoe* and the second as Doeg in *Absalom and Achitophel*.

**26, 29. Production of a boy:** Pope claimed to have written his *Pastorals* at sixteen.

**27, 3. Lives of the Poets:** Johnson's *Lives of the Poets*, completed in 1781, contains brief biographies of fifty-two English writers, some of which were prepared by others. Some of the "Lives" are excellent and the work as a whole is interesting because it reflects the views of Johnson and his time.

**27, 15. Burke:** Edmund Burke (1729-1797), one of the greatest of English statesmen, and a great orator and writer. His *Vindication of Natural Society* (1756) was an attempt to show the absurdity of Bolingbroke's plan for throwing ridicule upon established religion. His *Reflections on the French Revolution* made him famous throughout Europe. The *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs* (1791) and *Thoughts on the Prospect of Peace with a Regicide Directory* (1797) were supplementary to the *Reflections*. Burke's point of view was conservative, but he had a deep insight into the significance of passing events. Among other pieces Burke wrote a treatise on the *Sublime and the Beautiful*, two speeches and a letter on taxation of America, and a *Letter to a Noble Lord* (1796). The latter has been called "the most splendid repartee in the English language."

**27, 31. Sophocles** (495-405 B. C.) seems to us the greatest of the Greek dramatists. He is said to have written more than a hundred plays, of which only seven remain. Of these the best known is the *Antigone*.

**28, 1. Demosthenes** (385-322 B. C.) was the greatest of the Greek orators and one of the greatest of the Greek statesmen. His father died before he was eight years old, leaving a fortune of some

14,000 dollars, which fell into the hands of unscrupulous guardians. As soon as he reached the legal age of eighteen years, Demosthenes brought suit to recover the property which had been dissipated, and two years later delivered his *Speech against the Guardians*. He secured a favorable verdict, though for some reason he failed to receive the money. Demosthenes had been at great pains to train himself for speech-making and rendered important public service by arousing his countrymen against the designs of Philip of Macedon, earning for certain of his orations the title of "Philippics." He not only spoke but contributed money, and led in organizing a military campaign. For these public services it was proposed by Ctesiphon in 336 that Demosthenes be given a crown. A rival, Æschines, said to have been in the pay of Philip of Macedon, immediately charged Ctesiphon with offering an illegal measure. The case came to trial in 330, and Demosthenes' speech *On the Crown* was such a crushing reply to the attack of Æschines that the latter voluntarily left the country.

**28, 7. Cicero's:** Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 B. C.) the most illustrious of Roman orators and second only to Demosthenes among the ancients. He was a famous lawyer and statesman, and held many public offices. Politically he was opposed to the usurpation of power by Cæsar and others, and denounced the conduct of Marc Antony in a series of Philippics modeled upon those of Demosthenes. Biographies of both Cicero and Demosthenes are included in Plutarch's *Lives*.

**28, 10. Racine's:** Jean Baptiste Racine (1639-1699) is the greatest of the French writers of tragedy. His first play, *La Thebaïde*, afterward known as *Les Frères Ennemis*, was acted at the Palais Royal by Molière's company in 1664. His last and best, *Athalie*, was written for the students of a girls' school at St. Cyr. Hannah More urged Macaulay to become a "real Frenchman" so that he might read Racine.

**28, 11. Molière's:** Jean Baptiste Poquelin (1622-1673), the greatest of French actors and writers of comedy and for many years manager of a remarkable company of players. His first play, *L'Etourdi*, was produced in 1653 and *Tartuffe* in 1664.

**28, 13. Cervantes:** Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, the most celebrated Spanish author. Lowell declared his novel, *Don Quixote*, one of the five greatest books ever written. This appeared in two parts, the first in 1605 and the second in 1616. Cervantes began his active career as a soldier of fortune but afterward became a writer, and pro-



duced a pastoral romance and some twenty plays, only two of which are preserved. From 1599 until 1601 he was in prison, and at this time, like Bunyan, produced a masterpiece. In later life he wrote a number of short novels of adventure. Macaulay thought *Don Quixote* the best novel in the world.

**28, 15. Schiller:** Johann Christoph Friedrich Schiller (1759-1805), Germany's greatest playwright. Schiller was also eminent as a poet, as a critic, and as a historian. *The Robbers* was written while the author was still a student in a military academy and was first acted at Manheim in 1782. It is, of course, inferior to the later plays, among which are *The Maid of Orleans*, *William Tell*, and *Wallenstein*.

**28, 17. Goethe:** Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) is the greatest writer Germany has produced. His influence in determining the ideals of modern Germany no one can measure. *The Sorrows of Werther* is a highly romantic novel published in 1774, while *Faust* is a great poetic drama, which occupied the author's thought for many years. Part I was issued in 1806 and Part II in 1830. Goethe and Schiller were intimate friends and very greatly stimulated each other.

**29, 16. Marmontel:** Jean François Marmontel (1723-1799) a French journalist, author, and critic, who was secretary of the Academy of Letters.

**30, 15. The Fairy Queen** is an allegorical poem of great length, though unfinished, written by Edmund Spenser (1553-1599) and published at intervals from 1591 to 1596. The design was to show forth the character of an ideal knight and the poem may fairly be called the epic of English chivalry.

**30, 16. Bacon's Novum Organum:** Francis Bacon (1561-1626); became Baron Viscount St. Albans through the favor of James I, but lived beyond his means and retired from public life in disgrace. As a youth he declared, "I have taken all knowledge to be my province," and his subsequent performance went far to justify the claim. He mapped out a great work to be called the *Instauratio Magna*, of which his *De Augmentis Scientiarum* was the introduction and his *Novum Organum* (New Method) the first chapter. Through these Bacon established the inductive or analytic in place of the deductive method of reasoning and so laid the foundation of modern scientific study. His *Essays* are short and compact treatments of various problems of life in highly suggestive and forceful style. Macaulay's *Essay on Bacon* appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1837.

**30, 17. Locke's Essay:** foundation of the science of psychology. John Locke (1632-1704), while a student at Oxford, became deeply



interested in the possibilities of the human mind, and after a period of twenty years, in which he returned again and again to his task, he finished in 1687 his *Essay on the Human Understanding*. He contended that all our ideas come to us from experience and thus paved the way for the emphasis which is now placed on training children and young people by placing them in a favorable environment and encouraging them to use their own powers.

**30, 18. Clarendon's History.** Edward Hyde, First Earl of Clarendon (1608-1674) was Chancellor of the Exchequer under Charles I and Prime Minister under Charles II. His *History of the Rebellion in England* deals, therefore, with events with which he was personally familiar. He wrote also a *History of the Civil War in Ireland*. His style is stately, but his views were prejudiced and his histories are therefore unreliable.

#### QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR STUDY

1. Explain fully the occasion of this second speech. Why was the House in Committee? 2. Make an outline of the speech and compare it with the outline of the first speech. What are the chief differences? 3. Select all the passages which contain information that would help the members of the House in deciding how to vote. How did Macaulay acquire so much information? 4. Study both speeches in order to be able to state Macaulay's idea of the purpose of copyright. 5. Learn, if possible, how the copyright laws of England were affected by these speeches. 6. Do you know of other instances where a speaker has been able to mold opinion and influence public policy? 7. Which influences people more, a newspaper or magazine article or a speech? Why? 8. What is the best way to learn to speak? How did Macaulay learn? Read the biographies of several great orators in order to discover how they became powerful speakers. 9. Arrange a series of debates on some of the live issues of the day.

## LINCOLN'S ADDRESSES AND LETTERS

The appreciative understanding of Lincoln's speeches and letters requires an intimate acquaintance with Lincoln's life and with the history of the times in which he lived. Around no other American except Washington clusters so much of first rate importance to all citizens. Hence the student should take this occasion to trace step by step the career of Lincoln and to connect his activities with those events which shaped the nation and brought it into and through a great civil war. Ample references for this purpose will be found in the Descriptive Bibliography appended to the Introduction to this volume. Every member of the class should read one good life of Lincoln through.

### REPLY TO DOUGLAS AT PEORIA, OCTOBER 16, 1854

This speech marks the beginning of the great contest over slavery between Lincoln and Douglas which ended with Lincoln's election to the presidency of the United States. It was first delivered at Springfield, Ill., on October 4 at the State Fair, in answer to a long address which Douglas had made the day before with the purpose of justifying his recent course in Congress in regard to slavery. After the meeting at Peoria, Lincoln's speech was written out and published.

To grasp the significance of this speech it is necessary to recall the history of the slavery agitation and Douglas's part in it. At the time of the adoption of the Constitution, slavery existed in several states, but the framers of the document refrained from making any direct reference to it. The Northwest Territory, however, was made free by the Ordinance of 1787. From the beginning the slave-holding states were eager to control the Congress. To do so slave territory must be extended as new states were admitted; hence the main political issue in the country came to be slavery, and feeling concerning it often ran high. The first crisis was reached in 1898, when Missouri petitioned for admission to the Union. After violent agitation in Congress, a compromise measure proposed by Henry Clay was adopted in 1820. This forever prohibited slavery in the Louisiana Purchase north of 36° 30' north latitude, except in Missouri. After

this, however, Texas became independent of Mexico and applied for admission, and as a result of a dispute over the boundary line, the Mexican War broke out. This brought us large accessions of territory, including what are now New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and California, and the South was determined that this should be made into slave states. Clay, now a very old man, came forward with another compromise and was supported by Daniel Webster in his famous "Seventh of March Speech," and by Stephen A. Douglas, senator from Illinois, who had become a leader among the Democrats. New Mexico was allowed to decide the question of slavery for itself. California was admitted as a free state, and slavery was prohibited in the District of Columbia.

It was hoped that this famous Compromise of 1850 would settle the question of slavery. Statesmen on both sides, including Stephen A. Douglas, declared that they would never revive the issue. To the surprise of every one, however, when Nebraska, about four years later, applied for admission, Douglas brought forward a bill declaring that the Missouri Act of 1820 was inoperative and void. He invented the doctrine of "popular sovereignty," arguing that the people of the territories should be allowed to legislate freely on the slavery question as on other local affairs. The Nebraska Bill carried in spite of bitter opposition, but it infuriated a great part of the Northern people and compelled Douglas to hasten home to make his peace with his constituents. In Chicago he was at first hissed from the platform, but Douglas was a great leader and soon won back his following.

Great crowds from all parts of Illinois were to be met at the State Fair and hence he arranged to speak at Springfield. Lincoln, who had for some years been quietly practicing law and studying, had been deeply aroused by the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and had consequently reëntered politics, speaking vigorously against the policy of Douglas. Hence it naturally came about that he was put forward to answer Douglas's speech. He did so with such effect that Douglas felt called upon to reply, and when it was announced that Lincoln would give an address at Peoria twelve days later, Douglas immediately arranged to speak there on the same day. On both occasions Lincoln clearly worsted his opponent. It was this experience that led him four years later to challenge Douglas to a series of joint debates.

**35, 1.** But one great argument . . . still to come. The Peoria speech is long and only the concluding portion appears here. Lincoln

began with a résumé of the efforts of the North to apply the Declaration of Independence to all new territory which it acquired and failing in that to provide for peace by a series of compromises reserving as much territory for freedom as possible. He showed that the Kansas-Nebraska Bill was a direct violation of one of these compromises and declared that it was wrong. Declared indifference but really covert zeal for slavery he said he hated. He had, however, no prejudice against the Southern people; they were doing only what others would do in their situation. Then he took up the arguments for the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and answered them one by one. The chief one was "the sacred right of self-government."

**35, 7. "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread":** a line from the *Essay on Criticism* by Alexander Pope (1688-1744). What references to literature are to be found in Lincoln's speeches? With what poets was he familiar?

**35, 19. Oyster laws of Virginia.** What is the value of this illustration? Make a collection of Lincoln's illustrations and decide what effect they would have on the people to whom he was speaking.

**36, 30. Pro tanto:** a Latin phrase meaning "by so much." Had Lincoln studied Latin?

**37, 14. Opinions and examples of our Revolutionary fathers.** The speech at Cooper Institute was developed out of this idea. How did Lincoln acquire his knowledge of United States history?

**37, 34. The Ordinance of '87.** This provided for the government of the Northwest Territory, which included what is now the states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and part of Minnesota. It was passed in the closing days of the Congress of the Confederation and provided for the organization of five states in which slavery should forever be unlawful.

**39, 22. Places for poor white people to remove from.** Why did Lincoln's father leave Kentucky? For graphic pictures of the poor whites in the South read the novels of Miss Murfree and of John Fox, Jr.

**40, 6. Five slaves are counted as being equal to three whites:** one of the compromises of the Constitution, repealed by the Fourteenth Amendment. What similar difficulties over representation have arisen in our own time?

**42, 3. Behemoth of danger.** See *Job xl, 15*.

**42, 16. It hath no relish of salvation in it.** Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Act III, Scene iii, line 92. Does Lincoln quote accurately?

## QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR STUDY

1. Make an outline of Lincoln's argument against popular sovereignty. 2. Find, if possible, the arguments of Douglas which Lincoln is attacking. Or prepare to make a "supposed speech of Senator Douglas in favor of the Nebraska Bill." 3. What was the motive of Senator Douglas for introducing the Nebraska Bill? What was the effect upon his fortunes? 4. Read Lincoln's speech aloud, noticing how your mood changes. How did Lincoln appeal to the *feelings* of his hearers? 5. Recite the closing paragraph from memory. What book gave Lincoln his style?

SPEECH BEFORE THE REPUBLICAN STATE CONVENTION  
AT SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS, JUNE 17, 1858

**Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Convention.** This convention nominated Mr. Lincoln for United States senator. He had been a Whig candidate for senator in the Legislature of 1855, but lacked a few votes of election and withdrew in favor of Lyman Trumbull, a Democrat, who was known to be opposed to the policies of Stephen A. Douglas. Trumbull became one of Lincoln's strongest supporters. The opponents of slavery joined in a new party in Illinois in 1856 and began to call themselves Republicans. They held a convention at Decatur May 29 and called upon Lincoln, who was present as a visitor, to speak. He came forward and addressed the convention so eloquently that all the reporters present forgot to take notes, and from that time he was the acknowledged leader of the party. His "lost speech" was written out years later from notes by H. C. Whitney, a young lawyer with whom Lincoln had been traveling, and was published in "McClure's Magazine" for September, 1896.

44, 4. Since a policy was initiated: the repeal of the Missouri Compromise.

44, 10. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." Where did Lincoln get this expression? The passage beginning with these words is one of the most memorable uttered by an American. (With what others would you compare it?) Lincoln understood its full significance and retained it in his speech contrary to the advice of almost all of his friends. (See Herndon and Weik, *Abraham Lincoln*, Vol. II, pp. 66-69.) It quickly made the rounds of the public press, and brought Lincoln into prominence outside of his own state. The

speech as a whole was prepared with the utmost care and had as much or more influence than the Cooper Institute speech in making him President.

**44, 25. Dred Scott Decision.** Lincoln's own explanation of this and of its significance will be found a few lines below. For the details consult Hart's or some other good American history.

**46, 21. As to amount to just this.** Note Lincoln's power of plain statement. This was one of the chief sources of his success as a speaker.

**46, 1. Down they voted the amendment:** offered by Salmon P. Chase, of Ohio, whom Lincoln afterward appointed Secretary of the Treasury and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

**46, 16. Senator Trumbull:** in the Senate because Lincoln was more devoted to principle than to party. See the note to line 1, p. 44.

**46, 27. The outgoing President, in his last annual message:** Franklin Pierce. James G. Blaine says: "The purpose and scope of the [Dred Scott] decision was undoubtedly known to President Pierce before the end of his term, and President Buchanan imprudently announced in his inaugural address that the point of time when the people of a territory can decide for themselves will be speedily and finally settled by the Supreme Court." (*Twenty Years in Congress*, Vol. I, p. 132.)

**47, 4. Indorsing the Dred Scott decision.** Douglas spoke at Springfield, June 12, 1857 and was answered by Lincoln at the same place June 26. (See Nicolay and Hay, II, pp. 85-89.)

**47, 7. The Silliman letter:** written by Professor Silliman, of Yale, for a group of Connecticut citizens to inquire about certain phases of the slavery question in Kansas. In his reply President Buchanan took the position that according to the Dred Scott decision slavery legally existed in the territory.

**47, 12. The Lecompton constitution.** After the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Bill in 1854 it was expected that Nebraska would come in as a free state but Kansas was doubtful. Hence members of both factions rushed into the territory in order to control it. Both sides were armed and bloody conflicts ensued. By intimidation and force a proslavery legislature was elected, which passed a law making it a crime even to assert that persons had not the right to hold slaves. The antislavery party called a rival legislature together at Topeka, and such fierce riots occurred that President Pierce ordered the United States troops to disperse it. In 1857 a convention met at



Lecompton to frame a state constitution. The free-state men refused to participate in the convention or in the election which followed. Nevertheless, the Buchanan administration attempted to secure the admission of Kansas as a state under the Lecompton constitution. Douglas opposed this and defeated the measure, thereby gaining the approval of the North but so far offending the South that his election to the Presidency became impossible.

**50, 1. Stephen, Franklin, Roger, and James:** Douglas, Pierce, Taney, and Buchanan. Lincoln believed that there was such a preconcert, and repeated the charge many times in the debates with Douglas. There is, however, no proof of the charge which seems sufficient to substantiate it.

**50, 33. McLean or Curtis:** two judges of the Supreme Court who refused to concur in the Dred Scott decision.

**52, 6. The aptest instrument.** Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, was one of the most influential of those who suggested the choice of Douglas as national anti-slavery leader because of his stand on the Kansas question. Find out who Greeley was and whether his judgment on political matters was usually sound.

**52, 12. "A living dog is better than a dead lion":** see *Ecclesiastes*, ix, 4.

#### QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR STUDY

1. What effect did Lincoln seek to produce by means of this speech? If you had sat in the convention what would you have resolved to do? Why? 2. Sum up the whole speech in one sentence. 3. Show how Lincoln leads his hearers step by step to the point where they must admit that a struggle is inevitable unless the whole country consents to become slave territory. 4. Why does Lincoln close by paying his respects to Douglas and his party in comparison with the Republicans?

#### REPLY TO DOUGLAS AT ALTON, ILLINOIS, OCTOBER 15, 1858

About a month after the Springfield convention at which Lincoln was nominated for United States senator, his Democratic opponent, Stephen A. Douglas, returned to his home in Chicago and at a great reception in his honor took occasion to reply to Lincoln's convention speech. Lincoln was present at the reception and was called upon to reply. He did so the following evening. A few days later, on the advice of the Republican managers, Lincoln challenged Douglas to

a series of debates on the issues raised in these speeches. Douglas reluctantly accepted and there ensued a series of forensic contests more remarkable than ever witnessed before or since. Douglas was shrewd and resourceful; Lincoln, plain and earnest. Douglas secured the senatorship though not a majority of the popular vote, but Lincoln won the far greater prize of the Presidency, because he held firmly to the fundamental principle that slavery was wrong and must some day become extinct.

Seven debates were held so as to cover all parts of Illinois, and immense crowds attended. The speeches were very fully reported in the papers at the time and were later printed as campaign documents. The text is the summary of his arguments which was made by Lincoln at the closing debate at Alton. For accounts of the whole series see Herndon and Weik, Morse, or Tarbell, as well as editions of the debates by Sparks and others. A good estimate of Douglas will be found in Blaine's *Twenty Years in Congress*.

#### ADDRESS AT COOPER UNION, FEBRUARY 27, 1860

Though Lincoln had served one term in Congress and had made a few speeches in New England, he remained, up to the time of the debates with Douglas, practically unknown to the East. The debates were widely published in the papers and attracted much attention. "Who is this Abe Lincoln," people were asking, "that can so embarrass in argument the foremost political leader of the day?" Hence it came about that the Young Men's Republican Union of New York City invited Mr. Lincoln to make an address under its auspices. Lincoln was eager for such an opportunity and accepted, stipulating that he should be allowed to choose a political subject if he wished.

Realizing the importance of the occasion, Lincoln prepared himself with the greatest care. Even after his arrival in New York, when he learned that so imposing an audience room as Cooper Institute had been chosen, he continued to work on his speech.

The result was a masterpiece. Although his hearers numbered among them the most intelligent and refined persons of the time, all were delighted. He was introduced by William Cullen Bryant and seemed at first awkward and ill at ease, but as he launched into his theme his face kindled and his whole being grew eloquent. He held his audience in rapt attention for more than an hour and at once took rank as one of the greatest orators.

The address was published in full in the papers and was in substance repeated in several places in New England. Everywhere the effect was the same. The people felt that Lincoln was a sincere man who had the truth and knew how to express it. Doubtless it is too much to say that this speech made Lincoln president, but it certainly contributed very much to that end, and it had very great influence in shaping the course of thousands of the people of the North as well as of Lincoln himself in the five years that followed its delivery. (See *Choate's Career and Character of Abraham Lincoln*, pp. 16 and 17. For a different view see Mr. Field's report in Ward's *Abraham Lincoln*, pp. 207-209.)

**60, 7. Speech last autumn at Columbus.** Lincoln followed Douglas and answered him. See Lincoln's Columbus Speech. See also the paragraph with reference to the "Revolutionary fathers" in the Peoria speech.

**60, 26. The "thirty-nine."** Refer to one of the larger histories of the United States for an account of the constitutional convention. Fiske's *Critical Period of American History* is a good authority.

**61, 10. It is this.** If possible examine the Columbus speech of Senator Douglas in order to determine whether Mr. Lincoln states Douglas's position fairly or not.

**61, 21. In 1784.** In that year an ordinance prohibiting slavery in the territory of the nation north of parallel  $31^{\circ}$  after 1800 was introduced by Thomas Jefferson but it failed of passage.

**62, 15. The Ordinance of '87:** the ordinance for the government of the Northwest Territory. This forbade slavery or involuntary servitude except for crime.

**62, 28. Without ayes and nays:** without a roll call, which is sure to be demanded if there is opposition to a measure in Congress.

**63, 17. North Carolina ceded to the Federal Government.** Consult a map of the period in order to learn what territory was claimed by the original colonies.

**64, 8. The Louisiana country:** purchased from France in Jefferson's administration. All the land drained by the western tributaries of the Mississippi was included. The population was 40,000.

**65, 6. The Missouri question:** the Missouri Compromise.

**65, 9. Charles Pinckney (1746-1825)** helped to frame the Ordinance of 1787 and opposed all amendments to it.

**65, 20. The only acts . . . I have been able to discover.** Mr. Nott and Mr. Brainerd, two of the members of the executive committee of the Young Men's Republican Union, prepared for pub-

lication an annotated edition of Lincoln's speech. They say of it in their preface, "No one who has not actually attempted to verify its details can understand the patient research and historical labor which it involved."

**66, 1. Corporal oaths:** oaths ratified by touching a sacred object or "corpus." The Bible is sometimes used in this way.

**67, 3. Much reason to believe.** What precisely did Mr. Lincoln have in mind?

**68, 13. The Dred Scott case.** See the note to page 44, line 25.

**71, 28. Black Republicans:** a term of reproach intended to suggest that Lincoln and his party were radical abolitionists. Douglas made this charge again and again in the debates. What was Lincoln's real position?

**72, 15. Shall get votes in your section.** The Republican vote in the slave states in 1860 was as follows: Missouri 17,028, Kentucky 1364, Virginia 1929, Maryland 2294, Delaware 3815.

**74, 32. John Brown** (1800-1850) was a New Englander who went to Kansas at the time of the slavery agitation in 1855 and there became one of the most aggressive of the free-state men, winning the title of Ossawatimie Brown by a successful attack on a party from Missouri in 1856. Three years later he went to Harper's Ferry, Virginia, and seized the United States arsenal, hoping for an uprising of the negroes. This, however, did not occur, and Brown's party was overcome by troops under Robert E. Lee. Several of Brown's followers, including two of his sons, were killed in the fight, and Brown himself was tried, convicted, and hanged. This unfortunate affair did much to increase the bitterness of sectional feeling; each side accused the other of being responsible for it.

**76, 7. The Southampton insurrection:** called also Nat Turner's insurrection. It occurred in Southampton County, Virginia in 1831, was led by a negro called Nat Turner, and resulted in the massacre of more than sixty white persons, mostly women and children. The abolitionists were charged with having incited the uprising.

**76, 12. I do not think a general . . . slave insurrection is possible.** This opinion was justified by the conduct of the slaves during the Civil War.

**76, 25. The slave revolution in Hayti:** an echo of the French Revolution. It occurred in 1791 and was led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, a full-blooded negro. The object was to throw off the rule of the French and Spanish aristocracy and this was attained. Wendell

Phillips took the hero for the subject of one of his most eloquent lectures.

**76, 27. The Gunpowder Plot:** an attempt in 1604 on the part of some members of the Catholic party to prevent oppressive measures against them by blowing up the Parliament House while the king was giving the address from the throne. The plot was disclosed by a friend of one of the members, and the conspirators were caught and punished.

**77, 10. *Pari passu*:** "with equal progress." Lincoln was long an advocate of the purchase and deportation of the slaves. For the activities of Jefferson in connection with the abolition of slavery see Fiske's *Critical Period*.

**77, 31. Orsini's attempt on Louis Napoleon.** This was in 1858. The leader, Felice Orsini, made his headquarters in London. He was tried and acquitted by an English jury and the French thought the English negligent in the matter. Orsini was afterward executed in Paris.

**78, 4. Helper's book.** In 1857 H. R. Helper, a poor white of North Carolina, published a book called *The Impending Crisis of the South*, in which he pointed out that the social and economic condition of the poor white men of the South would be much improved by the abolition of slavery. The slave holders were greatly incensed by the book, while the Republicans circulated thousands of copies of it as a campaign document. What other book figured prominently in the anti-slavery agitation?

**78, 29. As property.** The Republicans held that the Constitution regarded slaves as persons bound to labor, not mere property.

**79, 6. The Supreme Court has decided:** in the famous Dred Scott case. Note Lincoln's analysis.

**82, 10. Senator Douglas's new sedition law.** Douglas introduced a resolution in the Senate instructing the Committee on the Judiciary to report a bill for the protection of each state and territory against conspiracies or combinations made in other states with the intent to molest government, inhabitants, property, or institutions. What seems to have been the object of the resolution? Why would Senator Douglas introduce it?

**83, 33. Policy of "don't care."** Senator Douglas declared publicly that he did not care whether slavery "was voted up or voted down."

**84, 5. What Washington said . . . did.** Washington hoped that some day the nation would be a confederacy of free states. As Presi-



dent he signed the Ordinance of '87, which prohibited slavery in the Northwest Territory.

#### QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR STUDY

1. What use does Lincoln make of his "text"? 2. Make an outline of the main divisions of the speech. Can the whole be summed up in one sentence? 3. What classes of people did Lincoln hope to reach and influence? What did he want them to do? 4. The speech is said to have been very convincing. Explain what made it so.
5. Show how Lincoln turned the enemy's own guns upon them.

#### LINCOLN'S FAREWELL ADDRESS AT SPRINGFIELD

After Mr. Lincoln's election to the Presidency he remained quietly at his home in Springfield, receiving visits from time to time from prominent men and making up his mind about who should be in his cabinet. Meanwhile some of the Southern States seceded, and war clouds began to threaten. When the time of departure arrived, a large company of Lincoln's townsmen gathered at the station to say farewell. All shook his hand and then as the train was about to start Mr. Lincoln took his place on the platform, removed his hat, though the rain was falling, and delivered a short but touching and dignified address.

What light does this address throw upon the character of Lincoln and upon his remarkable popularity?

#### ADDRESSES DELIVERED ON THE JOURNEY TO WASHINGTON

The presidential party traveled to Washington by way of the principal cities of the North, and on several occasions Mr. Lincoln made brief speeches. In these he sought to impress his hearers with the gravity of the situation and with the fact that the responsibility for the future rested upon the body of citizens, but he studiously avoided making a statement of the policy of the government. In this he displayed his profound insight and political wisdom. The most impressive of the speeches was doubtless that delivered at Independence Hall in Philadelphia. Note the closing words, which seem like a premonition.



## QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR STUDY

1. How was Lincoln received by the people on his journey? 2. What had happened since Lincoln's election to increase the gravity of the situation he must face? 3. Why was it wise for him to avoid stating the policy of the government until inauguration day? 4. What evidence is there that a plot was laid to kill Lincoln before he could reach Washington?

## FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Lincoln's first inaugural address is one of the most important of American state papers and it is also one of the finest. It was prepared with the greatest care before Mr. Lincoln left Springfield to go to Washington, but the process of revision and polishing continued until the very day of delivery. An interesting account of the inauguration ceremonies will be found in Schouler's *History of the United States*, Vol. V, p. 5.

**92, 2.** A custom as old as the government. The speech opens with this reference to established custom. What was the purpose of such an opening?

**92, 10.** Apprehension seems to exist. At the very time these words were uttered, representatives from a number of the Southern States were organizing the Confederate Government at Montgomery, Alabama.

**92, 21.** I have no lawful right to do so. How then could he issue the Emancipation Proclamation?

**93, 18.** There is much controversy. The radical wing of the Republican Party was opposed to the Fugitive Slave Law and criticised Lincoln for his attitude toward it. How did those who aided slaves to get away justify their acts? Look in the American History for an account of the "Underground Railway."

**94, 20.** I take the official oath: administered to Mr. Lincoln by Chief Justice Taney, he who handed down the Dred Scott decision, while Stephen A. Douglas held Mr. Lincoln's hat. Read the oath, which you will find in section 1 of article 2 of the Constitution of the United States.

**94, 31.** Fifteen different and greatly distinguished citizens. Name these in order. What were some of the "perils" through which they conducted the government?

**95, 3. A disruption . . . heretofore menaced.** What were the Nullification Acts? What was the attitude of New England in the Hartford Convention of 1814?

**95, 6. The Union of these States is perpetual:** the first explicit statement of the doctrine. The right of secession was not seriously questioned before 1860. This is why Lincoln may be said to be almost as much the "Father of his Country" as Washington himself.

**95, 23. The Union is much older than the Constitution.** Trace the history of the Union by looking up the following: (1) New England Confederation of 1643. (2) The plan of union proposed by William Penn. (3) Franklin's Plan of Union, presented to the colonial congress at Albany in 1754. (4) The Stamp Act Congress of 1765. (5) The Continental Congresses of 1774 and 1775. (6) The Articles of Confederation, adopted in 1778.

**96, 10. The Union is unbroken.** Lincoln held steadily to this view, and at the close of the war undertook the task of reconstruction with this as a presupposition.

**97, 24. The ills you fly from.** The speaker doubtless had in mind the lines in *Hamlet*, Act III, Scene i.

"Makes us rather bear those ills we have  
Than fly to others that we know of."

**98, 21. Majorities and minorities.** Note carefully Lincoln's statement of the principle upon which democratic government rests.

**101, 12. Either of the modes prescribed.** What are these modes?

**101, 22. A proposed amendment.** This grew out of various attempts to find a solution of the national difficulties in the closing weeks of the Buchanan administration. The amendment provided that Congress should never be given power to interfere with the domestic institutions of the states. It was passed and signed by the President, but since it added nothing to the Constitution was simply dropped out of sight.

**102, 2. His duty is to administer the present government.** Amid the babel of conflicting views this simple program of Mr. Lincoln gradually approved itself as being both good policy and good sense.

**103, 10. I am loath to close.** When Mr. Lincoln showed his inaugural address to Mr. Seward, the latter said that he approved it but that he would add "some words of affection, some of calm and cheerful confidence." He wrote out for Mr. Lincoln a paragraph to show what he had in mind. Lincoln accepted this in substance but

modified the form. Compare the closing words of the address with Seward's, which follows.

"I close, we are not, we must not be, aliens or enemies, but fellow-countrymen and brethren. Although passion has strained our bonds of affection too hardly, they must not, I am sure they will not, be broken. The mystic chords which, proceeding from so many battle-fields and so many patriot graves, pass through all hearts and all hearths in this broad continent of ours, will yet again harmonize in their ancient music when breathed upon by the guardian angel of the nation."

#### QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR STUDY

1. Find and read a description of the scene while the address was being delivered. 2. What was Mr. Lincoln's chief purpose? 3. Sum up in a few words his chief argument. 4. What classes of people would be dissatisfied with the address? Why? 5. Find and read those articles in the Constitution which bear most directly upon the situation which Mr. Lincoln had to face.

#### LETTER TO WILLIAM H. SEWARD

Before the National Convention of the Republican Party in Chicago in 1860 it was generally assumed that William H. Seward, of New York, would be the nominee for President. After the election, therefore, Mr. Lincoln promptly offered him the position of Secretary of State and to this office Mr. Seward was appointed. But like most men in the East Mr. Seward had too low an estimate of the new President's ability. Seward was, moreover, impulsive and full of confidence in himself. Hence in a few days after the inauguration he sent the following:

*"Thoughts for the President's Consideration:*

*"First.* We are at the end of a month's administration, and yet without a policy either domestic or foreign.

*"Second.* This, however, is not culpable, and it has even been unavoidable. The presence of the Senate, with the need to meet applications for patronage, have prevented attention to other and more grave matters.

*"Third.* But further delay to adopt and prosecute our policies for both domestic and foreign affairs would not only bring scandal on the administration, but danger upon the country.

"*Fourth.* To do this we must dismiss the applicants for office. But how? I suggest that we make the local appointments forthwith, leaving foreign or general ones for ulterior and occasional action.

"*Fifth.* The policy at home. I am aware that my views are singular, and perhaps not sufficiently explained. My system is built upon this idea as a ruling one, namely, that we must

"CHANGE THE QUESTION BEFORE THE PUBLIC FROM ONE UPON SLAVERY, OR ABOUT SLAVERY, for a question upon UNION OR DIS-UNION:

"In other words, from what would be regarded as a party question to one of patriotism or union.

"The occupation or evacuation of Fort Sumter, although not in fact a slavery or a party question, is so regarded. Witness the temper manifested by the Republicans in the free States, and even by the Union men in the South.

"I would therefore terminate it as a safe means for changing the issue. I deem it fortunate that the last administration created the necessity.

"For the rest, I would simultaneously defend and reinforce all the ports in the gulf, and have the navy recalled from foreign stations to be prepared for a blockade. Put the island of Key West under martial law.

"This will raise distinctly the question of union or disunion. I would maintain every fort and possession in the South.

*"For Foreign Nations*

"I would demand explanations from Spain and France, categorically, at once.

"I would seek explanations from Great Britain and Russia, and send agents into Canada, Mexico, and Central America to rouse a vigorous continental spirit of independence on this continent against European intervention.

"And, if satisfactory explanations are not received from Spain and France,

"Would convene Congress and declare war against them.

"But whatever policy we adopt, there must be an energetic prosecution of it.

"For this purpose it must be somebody's business to pursue and direct it incessantly.

"Either the President must do it himself, and be all the while active in it, or

"Devolve it on some other member of his cabinet. Once adopted, debates on it must end, and all agree and abide.

"It is not in my especial province;

"But I neither seek to evade nor assume responsibility."

Mr. Lincoln replied immediately. What do the letters show as to the characters of the two men? What as to their judgment concerning public affairs in the crisis then pending?

### LETTER TO GENERAL McCLELLAN

Lincoln's greatest difficulty was to find generals who could handle large bodies of troops. This was especially the case with the armies operating near Washington. George B. McClellan had won a few victories in minor engagements in West Virginia and was called to Washington and placed in command of the Army of the Potomac. He proved a good organizer but a poor fighter, and Lincoln was obliged to meet severe criticism because of McClellan's inaction. In fairness to McClellan it should be said that he developed a good army and hence deserves somewhat of the credit for the later victories of Meade and Grant. Note the clearness with which Lincoln states his view of the situation.

### LETTER TO HORACE GREELEY

Horace Greeley is one of the most interesting figures in the history of American journalism. As editor of the *New York Tribune* he wielded tremendous influence throughout the North. He was an active politician and in the campaign of 1860 supported Mr. Bates as against Seward and thus helped to make Lincoln's nomination possible. After Mr. Lincoln became President, Greeley greatly embarrassed the administration by his criticisms, especially with regard to the blunders of Lincoln's generals. With other radicals, although he had favored letting the seceding states go unopposed, he demanded immediate emancipation of the slaves and published an editorial entitled "The Prayer of Twenty Millions." Mr. Lincoln had before this prepared a draft of the Emancipation Proclamation but on the advice of Seward was waiting for a Union victory before issuing it. He was glad, therefore, to have the opportunity to make his views known by replying to Greeley's open letter.

## LETTER TO GENERAL JOSEPH HOOKER

As this letter shows, the progress of the Northern armies was hindered by lack of harmony among the commanding officers. General Hooker had criticised instead of helping both McClellan and Burnside.

## REPLY TO A COMMITTEE FROM CHICAGO

As explained above, Mr. Lincoln had already prepared the proclamation emancipating the slaves and was only waiting a favorable moment for issuing it. This came with the battle of Antietam. Note how clearly Lincoln can see both sides of a question.

## THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

A provisional proclamation was made on September 22, 1862, announcing that on January 1, 1863 the President would declare all slaves "within any State or any designated part of a state, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States," thenceforward and forever free. What amendment to the Constitution followed? What is the present condition of the negroes in the South?

## REPLY TO THE WORKINGMEN OF MANCHESTER

One of the most interesting phases of the history of the Civil War is the attitude assumed by the English. The sympathy of the ruling classes was generally with the South, but the common people favored the North. Thus the working people of Manchester, though severely injured by the blockade, which cut off the supply for the mills, sent Mr. Lincoln an address commending his policy.

## REPLY TO J. C. CONKLING

The lack of harmony and support in the North against which Mr. Lincoln had to contend is indicated by the fact that in June, 1863, a meeting was held in Springfield, Illinois, to censure the government and to take steps to form a Northwestern Confederacy. Lincoln's friends decided to hold a meeting to counteract this and invited Mr. Lincoln to attend and speak. The principal questions at issue are treated in his reply to J. C. Conkling, chairman of the committee of arrangements. Find and state these issues.



## ADDRESS AT GETTYSBURG

The battle of Gettysburg was the turning point of the Civil War. Lee had decided to invade the North, and if he had known the actual conditions might have marched upon Washington itself. Lincoln was obliged to choose a new general on the eve of a great conflict. Nevertheless, the victory went to the Union arms.

It was natural that the feeling of gratitude should be profound, and almost immediately after the battle steps were taken to set apart a portion of the field as a national cemetery. The dedication was appointed for the nineteenth of November, 1863, and Edward Everett, counted the greatest living American orator, was chosen to deliver the principal address. Mr. Lincoln was invited as chief magistrate of the nation to set apart the grounds for their sacred use by a few appropriate remarks.

The time was short and affairs pressing, and Mr. Lincoln did not find time to finish the writing of his address until on his way and even after he had arrived at his hotel on the day of delivery. Coming at the close of a long and highly polished oration, the few and simply uttered words of the President failed to produce much effect, and there was a general feeling of disappointment. Mr. Everett, however, was deeply impressed, and told Mr. Lincoln that his few words had come nearer to the heart of the occasion than all of the long speech which had preceded.

This was very true. When the short address was read in the papers the next day, it was seen to be a masterpiece, and it is now generally regarded as the finest single utterance of any American. It should be learned by heart and spoken slowly while the full meaning that is suggested is brought vividly to mind.

## LETTER TO GENERAL U. S. GRANT

Ulysses S. Grant was a graduate of West Point and a veteran of the Mexican War. At the beginning of the Rebellion he was an unsuccessful storekeeper and had difficulty in securing a commission in the army. He rose rapidly, however, and by brilliant victories at Fort Donelson, at Vicksburg, and at Chattanooga, overcame the obstacles which jealousy had placed in his path and became easily foremost among the Northern generals. Lincoln felt that he had found at last a man who could be trusted. Compare the letters to McClellan and Hooker.

## LETTER TO MRS. BIXBY

Lincoln's kindness of heart is proverbial. He could not bear to see even the humblest creature suffer. The pathetic appeals which were made to him by relatives of soldiers who had got into trouble led to so many pardons that his subordinates sometimes despaired of maintaining discipline in the army. The letter to Mrs. Bixby is regarded as the finest of his many expressions of sympathy. It was written soon after Lincoln's second election.

## THE SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS

The nomination of Mr. Lincoln for a second term was opposed by both the radicals and the peace party, but in the convention he received almost the entire vote on the first ballot. Before election, notable victories by Farragut at Mobile and Sherman at Atlanta had awakened new hope and aroused confidence in the conduct of the war and as a result Lincoln defeated McClellan, the Democratic candidate, by an overwhelming vote. Grant was pounding away at Petersburg and Richmond and the fall of the Confederacy was plainly in sight. Under these circumstances Mr. Lincoln's second inaugural address took on the character of an interpretation of the harrowing experience through which the nation had been passing and an appeal for the binding up of all wounds, of flesh and spirit alike. His constant companionship with the Bible is evident in the closing paragraphs.

**130, 16.** Let us judge not. See *Matthew, vii, 1.*

**130, 19.** Woe . . . because of offenses. See *Matthew, xviii, 7.*

**131, 2.** The judgments of the Lord. *Psalms, xix, 9.*

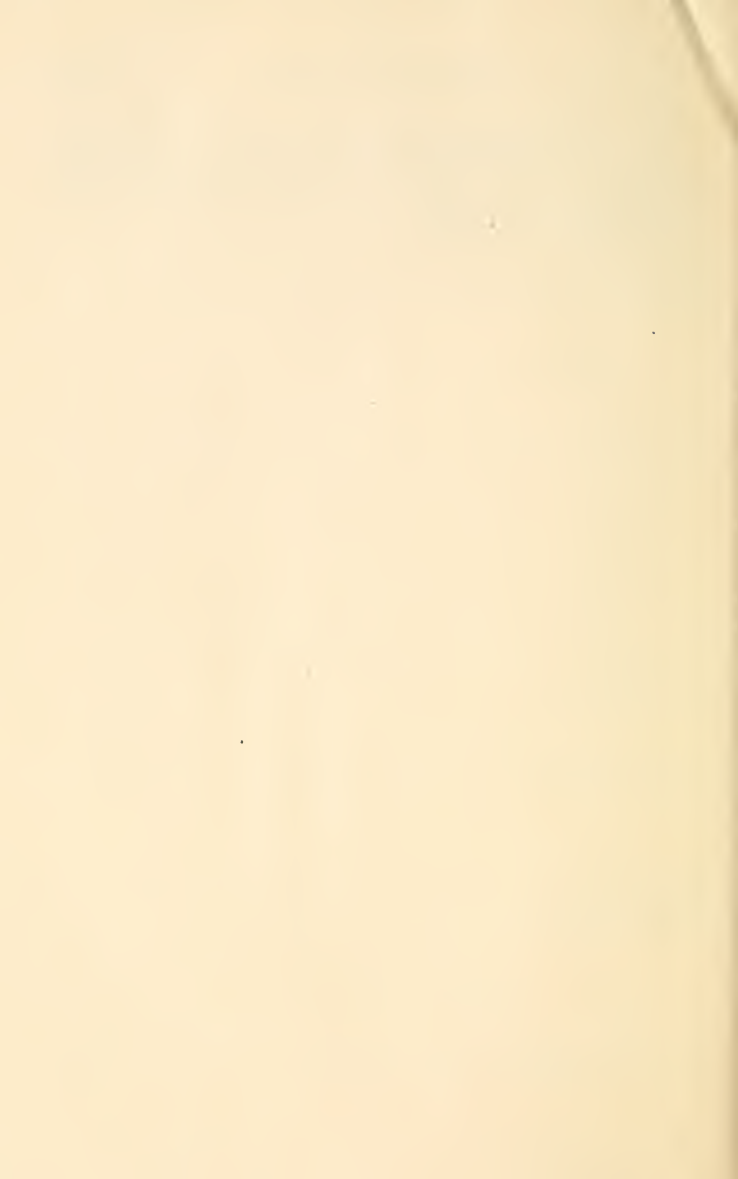
## QUESTIONS AND TOPICS FOR STUDY

1. Find in Schouler's, or some other, history of the United States an account of the second inauguration of Abraham Lincoln. 2. Which is greater, this address or that delivered at Gettysburg? Why? Learn the last paragraph by heart.

## LAST PUBLIC ADDRESS

This address was delivered to a party of serenaders at the White House a day or two after Lincoln's return from Richmond in April,

1865. The great work of reconstruction had already begun—but was to be finished, alas, by men with less of wisdom and magnanimity than Abraham Lincoln. This speech is invested with a certain added interest by the fact that only three days later the President was laid low by the hand of an assassin.



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